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World Review

Incorporating Review of Reviews

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LETTERS

The Great Academy

SIR,

The amount of clamour that is going up against the Abstract Expressionist movement is, I think, one of the more encouraging things about it. It sounds suspiciously like the clamour that greeted The Impressionists, the Fauves, the Cubists, and all manifestations of the school of Paris, not to mention the Expressionist schools that are now re-emerging to some popularity, on their first appearance.

It would be futile to quarrel with Mr. Wagner's evaluation of various artists (*World Review*, September), that, at such a stage of development, is only a form of the higher aesthetic gambling. It is quite clear from Mr. Wagner's article, however, that he prefers that type of painting which uses depictive elements to achieve its aims. There is certainly nothing wrong in this, but it makes a poor stick with which to beat those who use other methods. He has a tendency to confront artists with their own statements—which usually are, and always have been, silly. The logic of painting is not the logic of language and it is usually the artist who uses paint to represent a literary idea, not the highest kind of artist, who expresses himself best on paper and about the theory of painting. Even those painters, such as Delacroix, who were both good painters and good writers, were not conspicuous for the logical precision of their written thought. Every art movement that ever was is surrounded by second-raters and by crackpots; and I see no reason, nor, these days, does anybody else, for denigrating let us say Picasso, for the vagaries of Tristan Tzara or the paintings of Helickâ. Mr. Wagner also seems to feel it is a reflection on their probity that these artists are now cashing in, and are heavily financed. In view of the current selling price, popularity, and backing of, say, Andrew Wyeth, whose work Mr. Wagner admires, this argument can be used to beat all sorts of dead horses. Art has always been sold primarily to wealthy collectors of one sort or another, precisely because few people have ever had the perspicacity to buy it when it was cheap. And though it is true that one American newspaper was forced to give its art critic secret lessons in art history, at a flat fee, I do not think that our critics are any worse than, let us say, Mr. Wagner. He seems to fall into the fallacy of judging aesthetic matters by economic criteria.

DAVID STACTON

London, S.W.3

The Issues in the Union

SIR,

The present issues in the Union cannot be isolated from what has happened, not only elsewhere in Africa but in other parts of the world where the colour problem exists. It has not passed unnoticed in the Union that a large part of the rise of coloured nationalism, in the Far East, for example, has been directly due to Communist direction or encouragement; the Union, with its peculiar social structure and the numerically inferior white population, is obviously a particularly fertile field for Communist propaganda and agitation. The danger here cannot be overestimated, and the precautions that are being taken must be considered entirely from the point of view of the potential danger rather than as undemocratic measures against individuals.

To understand the Constitutional issues, it must be realised that the Nationalists are convinced that only they are capable of carrying out a mission of protection of the white population against the overwhelming superiority of the blacks and while the fear of not being returned to power at the next Election may partly lie behind the Constitutional changes, what else can a Government do other than change the Constitution if, as it exists, it menaces the future of the minority which is responsible for the life of the whole community? What country in the world would tolerate a Constitution, imposed in a time of strain and perhaps duress, which may

well accentuate the very thing which would not only destroy the white population, but bring destruction to the economy which provides a livelihood for the blacks as well? The present Government believes the future danger of the country being overrun by the blacks to be very real, and they realise that black nationalism is on the march. The example of the Gold Coast, a clear instance that the blacks can take over and run a country, may stimulate native thought here in the Union. Dr. Malan has declared that British Colonial policy is undermining the Commonwealth, and this opinion is not without some justification if considered in the light of the Union's problems. These happenings in other parts of Africa have convinced the Nationalists that a stand has to be made in this country and that it must be made now.

What, however, cannot be answered now is the fear of the English-speaking section that the Constitutional changes will lead to further changes to their detriment; only time will prove this, but there is no reason to suppose that one section will suffer at the expense of the other. Besides, unity between the two white sections is of paramount importance for the future and it is hardly likely that this would be purposely endangered. Quite naturally, opposition propaganda has played heavily on this theme and while it has admittedly aroused fears, it has also helped to widen the gap between English and Afrikaans.

The prospect of a Nationalist Republic has also been brought to the fore by those who claim to see this as one of the objects behind recent developments, but the Union can become a Republic at any time for it is a completely free and sovereign nation. To infer that recent Constitutional changes are designed to precipitate a Republic blinds the real issue—the protection of the white against the potential threat from the black, either self-inspired or brought about by Communist assistance. Naturally, to English ears, the mention of Republic and theories of racial segregation sounds strange—un-English—but then England has not problems such as this country has to cope with, neither have the English people at home the experience of living in a multi-racial society.

RALPH BROOKE
Johannesburg

NOTES

FRANCE

French foreign policy is in a cleft stick, and it is hardly surprising that both the federalist and neutralist movements are gaining ground. The three main problems find the French in covert conflict with their chief ally and financial prop, the United States. The wasting war in Indochina is not only chewing up her military cadres faster than new officers can be trained, but its enormous expense practically cancels out the financial assistance France is receiving from the American Government. In the vexed North African situation, American support of Arab aspirations, in an attempt to assure the support of the Arab States at the United Nations for the Korean venture, is causing much discontent in France. But it is the possibility of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation degenerating, in terms of military effectives, into a German-American alliance, which most perturbs French public opinion.

The one parallel line of initiative by which the French seek to bolster their position, that of seizing the leadership of a federal Europe before it goes by default to a renascent Germany, brings it into conflict with its only other major friend, Great Britain. In spite of the goodwill expressed by Mr. Eden, the fact remains that Britain has no intention of supporting any European scheme involving the surrender of political sovereignty on the part of the participating States. M. Schuman, the perennial Foreign Minister, is in a very exposed position in the Right-wing Pinay Government, and is only tolerated because of his reputation and the bloc of MRP votes he controls. He is heavily under fire, and his resignation might wreck the carefully-built-up edifice of Atlantic Union.

GERMANY

However much General Ramcke and his friends may have alarmed and angered the outside world, they have at least performed a service in showing that men like them still exist in Germany and can gain considerable support. Observers of events in Western Germany since the war have never hidden their fears of the turbulence lying beneath the placid surface of the Bonn régime. No one has doubted for a single moment Doctor Adenauer's protestations of his good intentions, but it should never be forgotten that the worst elements in the country have either been disenfranchised or have found no form of political expression.

The Christian Democrats were founded on the desire of all religious denominations to find a middle-of-the-road way to social welfare. With the passage of time they have become increasingly identified with their major Roman Catholic wing and may yet come to occupy a position analogous to the Zentrum Party in the Weimar Republic. The Free Democrats, originally professing Liberal ideas, and providing from their numbers a true Liberal in the person of President Heuss, have tended to become almost exclusively Right-wing in complexion. It is now their intention to attract the mass of heterogeneous support ranging from Conservatism to rabid Nationalism. If they succeed, they will become the strongest force in post-war German politics and dominated, inevitably, by their extremists. It is a terrifying prospect, but the Western Allies have long since abandoned any measure of control that could prevent it.

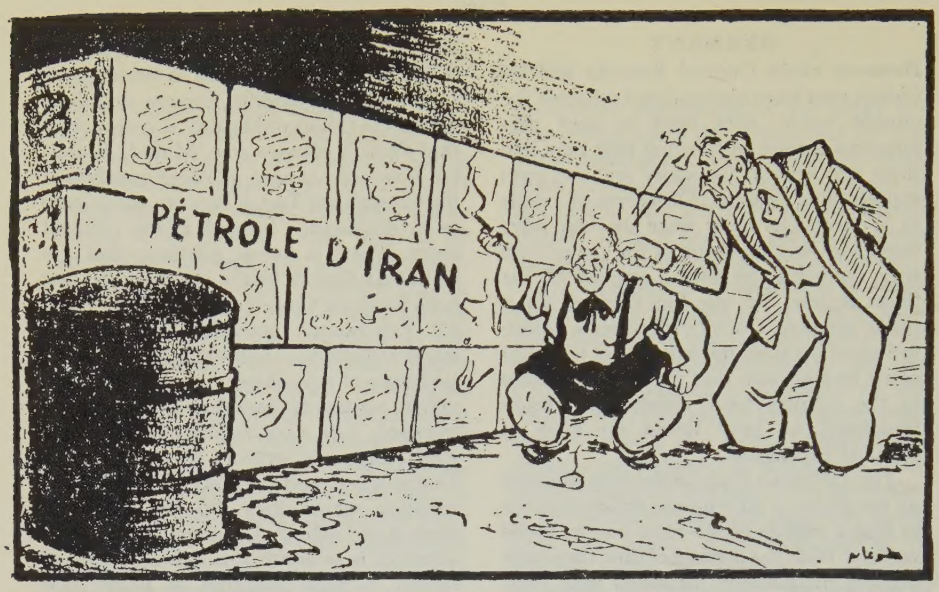
THE MIDDLE EAST

The order and good sense which General Neguib is rapidly injecting into Egyptian affairs is matched only too regrettably by the growing chaos and uncertainty of the Persian situation. Underlying the decay of Middle Eastern feudalism is an unholy alliance between the Communists and the Nationalist fanatics. Skilful Soviet propaganda is slowly erasing from the memory of the Moslem world the recollection of the ruthless stifling of their co-religionaries in Russia between the wars. The collapse of the 'Free Kurdish Republic' when the Red Army retired from Persia in 1946 was only a momentary set-back in Soviet plans to attract the Middle Eastern countries within the Communist orbit. It is now clear that Persia's *eminence grise*, Mullah Ayatollah Kashani, has been allowing members of the Communist Tudeh Party to participate in his domination by mob of the political scene. There is ample evidence that the turbulent Grand Mufti of Jerusalem has been fostering Communist participation in his Pan-Islamic activities. These Arab leaders regard the coalition as a temporary marriage of convenience, which they feel able to control or discard at any propitious moment. The Communists naturally regard Nationalist activity as a convenient Trojan horse, and they have yet to enter a coalition which they did not dominate when it had achieved its aims. The burning question is whether the nascent spirit of reform in such countries as Egypt will achieve results quickly enough to stem the rising tide of discontent.

FORMOSA

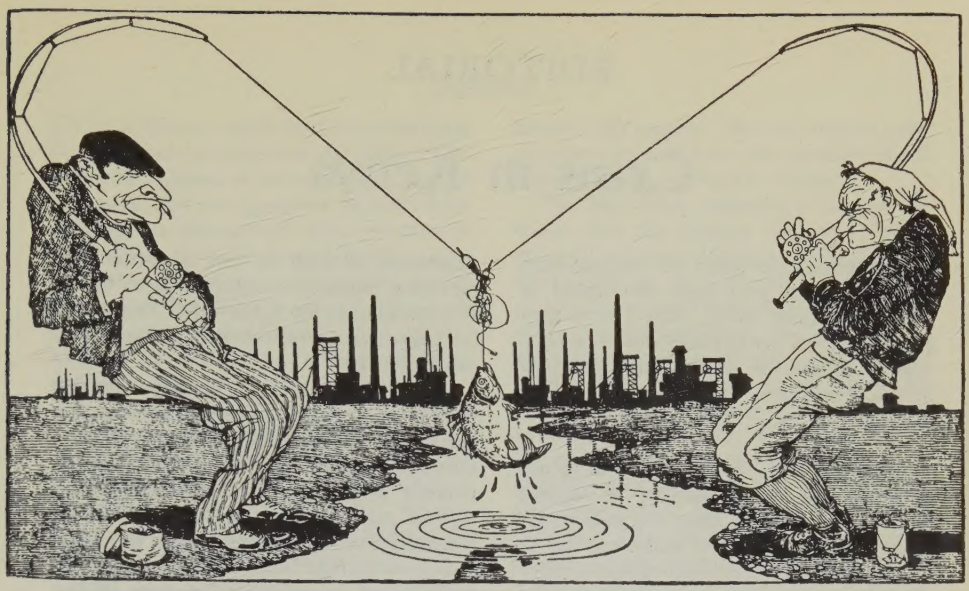
There are indications from the island of Formosa of quite a radical change of habits in the Kuomintang régime. Doubtless, Chiang Kai-shek and his ministers and generals are on their best behaviour as long as the flow of American aid continues, but their Government is both more orderly and less repressive, and there has been a notable decline in the heritage of Byzantine corruption they brought with them from the mainland.

The burden on the economy of over half a million Nationalist soldiers battening on a population of only eight million is still formidable. Nevertheless, the budget has been balanced, inflation halted, and the production of rice and sugar has increased to the point of covering all requirements. American aid naturally plays an important part, but then that is true of most Western European countries as well. Land rents have been lowered, a measure of agricultural reform put through, and the Formosans are electing an increasing proportion of county and provincial administrators. Formosa is still no paradise, but it is beginning to compare more than favourably with conditions on the mainland of China.



Truman to Churchill: 'It's just the place to play with matches' *Al Akhbar* (Egypt)

The Heavy-weight Partners *Krokodil* (U.S.S.R.)

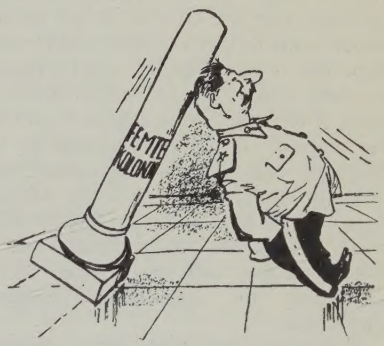


Entanglement on the Saar

Stuttgarter Zeitung

A very odd dove

Nebelspalter (Switzerland)



Soviet Architecture

Stockholms Tidningen

Malenkov's troupe of tame bears

Elseviers Weekblad (Holland)

EDITORIAL

Crisis in Kenya

LAST month I discussed the two political solutions which had been attempted in West and South Africa, and I then suggested that neither of them would be suitable or practicable in the third group of British Territories, the central and East African colonies.

In this group, though the Europeans number only some 250,000, as against 22,000,000 Africans, they are sufficiently numerous, compact and well-organised to be at present the dominant element. They are almost entirely responsible for the development of the vast area of 1,000,000 square miles (with a volume of exports in 1951 of some £110,000,000) and their economic rôle will be vital as the natural resources are further exploited. And—most important of all politically—the Europeans are there to stay. They will, from their own point of view they must, oppose to the last the transfer of political control to the Africans—even if such a proposal were seriously made, and even if the Africans were capable of taking over. On the other hand, a Malanite policy is ruled out by British pledges and—to be fair—is not advocated by responsible European spokesmen.

In Central and East Africa decisions must shortly be taken which will set the pattern of political relationship between European and African for our time. The Federation plan for the Rhodesias and Nyasaland comes up for final approval early next year, and far-ranging constitutional changes are due in East Africa. The territories are rapidly growing out of the stage of British tutelage and colonial rule. On all sides there is an increasing and understandable patience with 'interference' from Whitehall and administration by expatriate and transitory officials. The immediate task of the British Parliament and public is to lay the foundations for self-government. The foundations will determine whether or not a sound and enduring political structure will be built. It is essential to lay them right. This is the last direct service the British government can discharge.

Certain safeguards will have to be written into the new constitution, and the British government will undoubtedly retain the right of veto in certain matters (mainly to prevent racial discrimination) and of making some key appointments. But initiative and responsibility will pass into local hands. Reserved powers are of their nature negative, and, though its influence may still be strong, the British government's position vis-à-vis the territories will become much what it has been vis-à-vis Southern Rhodesia for the past thirty years—that of a distant referee.

* * *

It will then be for the local peoples—Europeans, Africans and Asians—to work out their own political destinies within the framework laid down. A satisfactory solution can only be found on the basis of partnership—of equality, not subordination. It is easy enough to laugh at partnership, as at any other political concept that has in it a spark of idealism. It can be called dishonest, impracticable, and half-baked. No one in his senses would dream of minimising the difficulties in achieving it, but what other positive answer is there? What other alternative can be suggested to the permanent domination of one race by the other? And—let there be no mistake about it—that means in terms of practical politics, domination of the Africans by the Europeans. In any system of partnership, the Europeans are bound to start off as the senior partner, but the Africans will demand, and (if the partnership is to have reality) must get, a greater voice as they progress in wealth and education. The balance between the partners will need to be continually adjusted in the

Africans' favour, and it is too much to hope that this can be done without friction. No minority rejoices at surrendering part of its power, and no expectant majority likes waiting. On the one side there are sure to be protests that the pace of African advance is too fast, and on the other that it is too slow. But it is the essence of political skill to settle such differences by reasonable compromises and without recourse to violence.

The aim has been stated in Cecil Rhodes's often-quoted words (from his message to the coloured people of Kimberley shortly before his death) as 'Equal rights for every civilised man'. But a great deal depends on what you mean by 'equal rights' and 'civilised'. In a Western democracy equal rights in a political sense means one man, one vote on a common electoral roll, and Cecil Rhodes (in the less-often quoted part of his message) went on to define 'civilised' as 'a man whether black or white who has sufficient education to write his name, has some property or works, in fact is not a loafer.' Most Europeans today—and not least those who claim to be fulfilling Rhodes's mission—would call this definition far too loose. Hundreds of thousands of Africans earn regular wages or own a small farm, and by mass-education techniques whole villages can learn to write their names in a morning. Even with a sterner literacy test enough Africans would fulfil Rhodes's conditions to swamp the European community if they were to vote on a common roll. But while the Europeans might be willing to allow the Africans an increasing say in affairs, it is inconceivable—at any rate in our time—that they would submit to African rule. The practicable answer is that, over the next generation or so, the Africans should become a full partner in the state with equal parliamentary representation.

* * *

A great change has taken place in the European attitude to the African in the last decade. There is a general willingness to accept the African as a partner, albeit subordinate for the time being. The question is now whether on the African side leaders will appear who can match compromise with and have the courage to tell their followers unpopular things.

The Mau-Mau outbreak in Kenya has shown that the African still has a lot to learn. The Kenya Africans—especially the Kikuyu—have plenty of grievances, some of which are very real. But their leaders should have known that that is no excuse for terrorism. The Mau-Mau has revealed itself as an evil mixture of primitive savagery and gangsterism. It is widespread, well-organised and has been building up its strength for the past two years. It numbers more Africans among its victims than Europeans. It has assassinated fine old men like Senior Chief Waruhiu of Kiambu. But it was not until after a series of outrages and the declaration of a state of emergency that the African political leaders—their members in the local legislature—came out against Mau-Mau in a belated and none too forcible statement. The champions of the law-abiding Africans were not the politicians but the chiefs. The politicians win very little credit for their part in the affair. Either they knew what was going on (like most other people in Kenya) but chose to keep quiet or alternatively they were so out of touch with African feeling as to be quite useless as representatives of their people. Mr. Mathu—the Kikuyu spokesman, and a member of the Governor's Executive Council—can hardly wonder that, in his own words, 'he has been put in political cold storage.' Many of his former associates on the Kenya African Union have been put elsewhere.

The African leaders have missed a great opportunity to prove worthy of the responsibility placed on them. There can be no hope of political advance unless the Africans show themselves fit and able to exercise the power entrusted to them in accordance with the rule of law, and civilised practice. The Europeans cannot be expected to let control pass into the hands of a gang of witch doctors and cut-throats. This is the tragedy of Kenya. It cannot but embitter racial feelings throughout Africa. And it is all the more alarming because most of the Mau-Mau leaders come from the educated class. Despite

their diplomas and School Certificates, they are still hanging cats on door-posts and sprinkling the faithful with the entrails of a goat. They may be literate, but are they civilised?

It is one of the greatest political challenges of our generation to see whether European and African can live together in amity—as partners, no longer as master and man. There is no reason to despair or think that a solution is impossible. In the last resort, the people who live in the territories must solve their own problems, though help and guidance can be given by the British government and people. The way will be long and hard. Χαλεπα τα καλα. This is one instance where gradualness is inevitable. A plural society can be made to work given good sense and goodwill on both sides. The first thing required in Britain is an understanding of the difficulties involved in uniting an advanced European minority with a backward African mass. We must refrain from the silly and often offensive advice which so many strolling publicists and politicians see fit to give to the local European communities. Let that at least be our contribution to the task.

DESMOND FITZGERALD

Beside the Point

ROHAN BUTLER
Fellow of All Souls, Oxford

Diminutives

DIMINUTIVES are most often affectionate. This is true of diminutive terms and terminations in European languages generally, from classical Greek onwards. Fond diminutives abound in Slavonic languages, as in Romance, in Russian as in Italian, while in Teutonic tongues one need look no further than *Mädchen* or *darling*. The little dear, the little woman confront the big bully, the hulking brute.

This philological and psychological truth largely led Edmund Burke, in distinguishing the sublime from the beautiful, to make the typically eighteenth-century generalisation that 'beautiful objects are comparatively small.' Such a transference from the affections to aesthetics is decidedly questionable, and Burke was on firmer ground in pointing out the element of power implicit in the human liking for smallness. In this connection he maintained that 'we submit to what we admire, but we love what submits to us.' This doctrine, incidentally, seems barely compatible with Christianity, but unhappily the possessive element in human love persists. Also on that seamy side, the affinities which can exist between affection and contempt are again reflected in language, as in the comparison between *darling* and *princeling*.

The psychological springs of human emotions are thus, partly at any rate, related to the physical scale of human existence, to the circumstance that the usual growth of man is up to about six feet high and two feet broad. The fact that children are less than that is not the least reason why they are so attractive.

To say that children were invented by the Victorians might be a slight exaggeration. No doubt there was never a time when parents were not reminding themselves that children will be children, and the continuity of games and toys reaches

back into the mists of time. Jointed dolls survive from ancient Egypt and tops have come spinning down two thousand years and more. Nevertheless it is difficult not to feel that before the Victorians children were children with a difference.

It is ironic and not, perhaps, fortuitous that the age which promulgated Darwin's doctrine of the survival of the fittest was precisely that wherein, almost for the first time in history, the chances of survival for the unfit and the weak were remarkably increased, thanks to revolutionary advances in medicine and in hygiene. Children, indeed, still died off, but they were no longer decimated in infancy, and parents gradually shed the worst of that fear, expressed by the tender Dorothy Osborne, of allowing themselves to grow too fond of their precarious offspring.

In preceding ages the risks of initiation into life had been matched by expectations of its early end. The brevity of the average expectation of life in the Middle Ages, and the severity of its incidence, is reflected in the mediaeval view that a boy came of age at fourteen and a girl at twelve, a discrepancy ascribed by one canon lawyer, Lyndwood, to the fact that ill weeds grow apace. Mediaeval children, while subject to the authoritative rule of their parents, were to a considerable extent used as little adults—perhaps, too, the adults were in some ways more like children, so that the gap was in any case less wide. Certainly a child might be married long before it came of age even according to that age. Babies were sometimes betrothed in their cradles for material advantage, and we hear of one little girl, Grace de Saleby, who married for the first time at four and for the third at eleven.

These illustrations are from Eileen Power's study of Thomas Betson. This fifteenth-century wool-merchant became engaged to Katherine Riche, a girl aged about thirteen, and his letters to her show that such a relationship, so alien from modern ideas, could rest upon an understanding affection. On 1 June 1476, Betson wrote from Calais to his betrothed in England: 'And if ye would be a good eater of your meat alway, that ye might wax and grow fast to be a woman, ye should make me the gladdest man of the world by my troth . . . I pray you greet well my horse and pray him to give you four of his years to help you withal; and I will at my coming home give him four of my years and four horse loaves till amends. Tell him that I prayed him so.'

Child-marriage remained a regular feature of society, certainly abroad, till nearly the close of the eighteenth century. And even if husbands were as tender to their child-wives as Betson to his fiancée, there was yet a natural tendency to love them more as children than as partners. This circumstance, which favoured mistresses, is often relevant in assessing the morals of, say, the court of Louis XV. Despite the social importance of women then, there was probably wide support for Lord Chesterfield's view: 'Women, then, are only children of a larger growth.'

In the eighteenth century even aristocratic children were still often extraordinarily neglected by modern standards. Talleyrand, for instance, relates that during his whole life he never spent one consecutive week under the same roof as his parents; he was permanently lamed by an accident which befell him when boarded out in infancy with a poor woman in the suburbs of Paris. Lack of parental care, however, by no means implied lack of parental control and almost the chief use of *lettres de cachet* arbitrarily confining prisoners in the dreaded Bastille was against disobedient children. But then the French traditionally have more feeling for family than for children, a considerable distinction. It is probably true that French children even today are apt to be treated to an exceptional extent as appendages to adult life. A satirical reminder to this effect was recently given by Miss Nancy Mitford in her hilarious description in *The Blessing* of children and grown-ups at a fancy-dress party in Parisian society.

It was Victorian England which truly discovered the autonomous realm of the nursery, of nannies and prams, Kate Greenaway and Mrs. Molesworth. The Victorian nursery focused the family and was not the least significant aspect of

Victorian feeling for solid order and security, those essential props of happy childhood. The well-meaning attempt to substitute freedom for order in a good deal of modern education seems to have met with distinctly qualified success. Few nowadays would wish to revive the less amiable features of Victorian strictness, yet the affinity of that age for children is suggested by the eagerness with which they still turn to the Water Babies and the stories of Mrs. Molesworth and G. A. Henty, not to mention the enchantments of the Jumblies or of Alice. If modern writers for children last as long, they will be doing well.

A modern handicap here is, I suspect, that our interest in children tends to be too scientific and self-conscious. For instance, it is arguable that Freud is to the twentieth century what Darwin was to the nineteenth, so that data as to the mental development of children is as important to us as data concerning the physical development of animals was to our grandfathers. The significance of child-psychology for any exploration of the subconscious and the irrational is clear. Only the other day I overheard five-year-old Sophia, playing indoors with her little brother, say, 'Just behind the chest-of-drawers is up the kitchen-garden'—an example, incidentally, not only of imaginative elision but also of spontaneous versification. (The same child recently jolted me with the supposition, 'Supposing Herod was God.')

Despite modern tendencies, however, the usual feeling for children nowadays is derived, much more than one is apt to realise, from the nineteenth century. Thus, while the sentimental attitude of Victorians towards women has been widely noticed, considerably less attention has been paid to what went closely with it, their sentimental attitude towards children: because, happily, it is still our own. Our debt here is also partly, I imagine, to the Germans—it is nice to owe them something pleasant for a change. That German influence upon Victorian England, which the Prince Consort fostered, is, in the case of children, brightly illustrated by the spread of illuminated Christmas-trees.

It can be objected, of course, that this pleasant picture is drawn in terms of the upper classes, whereas the industrial revolution intensified the shameful exploitation of poor children in mills, down mines, up chimneys. This dark underside is true enough but it is also true that, for instance, British factory legislation from the 1830's onwards and the searing Mines Report of 1842 bear early witness to the fact that it was precisely the Victorians who developed an enlightened social conscience: with regard to children, one has only to read *The Water Babies* or *Oliver Twist*. The beginnings of a more feeling concern for the poor went along with that for women and children, weak in other ways. This was the kind of development which, however imperfectly applied, underlay the now derided Victorian ideal of the Christian gentleman.

Class queries nevertheless persist: for instance, a nursery implies a nurse. Ideally a child should benefit from being more with its mother than with a servant, but this does not always seem to work out too well in practice. In America, where a full-time servant really is a luxurious rarity, home life in the true sense appears to be on the decline. Certainly when I was out there before the last war I was disconcerted even then to find so many children such horrid little hooligans, even towards their parents. That, though, may have been largely due to other causes, to the earlier adolescence of Americans, their ingrained dislike of authority including parental authority, and the tendency in such a society for children to feel themselves better than their elders. In general, though, it is not extraordinary that children should suffer if mothers are overworked, as is becoming almost the usual thing today. The two chief categories of persons whose emancipation was promoted by the Victorian Age were workers and women: what was not quite realised, perhaps, was the extent to which the first emancipation was liable to cut across the second.

The supposition that the increase in the child-population significantly underlay the Victorian feeling for children was rather borne out for me when I spent

Christmas in Paris two years ago. Up to the last war the New Year was the main midwinter festival in France, and I was surprised to find that now Christmas was prompting Paris into gala celebration upon a lavish scale. Four glittering great Christmas-trees turned the Place Vendôme into an enclave of delight; lamp-posts were garlanded with Parisian gaiety and taste, and the department-stores put on window-displays of toys more brilliant than anything I had seen in London. I particularly remember a window in the Galeries Lafayette staging a large dolls' roundabout with all the dolls going to the fair to the accompaniment of roundabout music tinkling out in authentic rhythm. The grown-ups, too, were really entering into the spirit of the thing, as indeed one could scarcely help doing. When I commented upon this novel emphasis to a Frenchwoman, she characteristically replied: 'But of course. Now for the first time it is a sound financial proposition to have children. Today the State encourages it and the *famille nombreuse* receives all kinds of special concessions and reductions. And now that many more children are with us, so is Christmas.'

If only more governmental policies had such benignant by-products. And perhaps, after all, French children are no longer so much treated as little adults.

Not only did I admire the windows of the Galeries Lafayette but, as a combatant under orders, I plunged into the toy department and scrummed down in a serried jam which might have made even a rugger-player think twice. Battling through, I ultimately surfaced at my goal, the doll-counter, only to find that the last eligible doll left had just had an arm torn off in a desperate engagement between two mammas. I had to do the best I could with one of those armless, bulbous wooden dolls which come in half to reveal a smaller one inside and so on several times over. I have an idea that such nests of dolls may have originally come from Russia and wonder whether they reflect a yet more easterly influence, that of Chinese boxes.

These inclusive dolls, like those tumbling models you can't knock over, seem more often than not to be masculine. The one I gave Sophia was promptly christened Father-Eats-Family, another gift of the psychologist. Apparently, too, the tyranny of initials is spreading from government departments to nursery quarters. Father-Eats-Family now regularly figures as F E F. Compendious compactness is one of F E F's obvious attractions, besides, of course, his diminutive stature. For attraction follows down the scale of size. If adults like even other people's children largely because they are smaller than themselves, children, and not only children, like toys for the same reason. It is logical that in fairyland fairies are small, ogres big. (The wicked fairy, the kindly giant are exceptions. Dwarfs are ambiguous.) I suppose that the habitual triumph of fairies over giants could be regarded as a mythical prefiguration of the process of taming the crude relation of size to power, physical strength to social predominance—the process, in fact, of achieving civilisation.

On the way back from fairyland one notices that toys are miniature worlds to organise, from dolls' houses to model farms. Within such brightly-coloured worlds there is further, I suspect, a special pleasure to be derived from variety within uniformity, aesthetic types respectively of freedom and of order. F E F qualifies under this head, since he and his cannibalistic family, varying in size and colour, are yet pleasingly identical in shape. This effect is still more obvious with lead soldiers where, for instance, the fun of the officer is that his uniform, basically the same as that of his men, is specially touched up, while he may carry a sword instead of a gun. (Nor is this military and heraldic pleasure confined to toys.) I remember how fond I used to be of a leaden platoon of guards, standard in their scarlet and busbies, who somewhat improbably carried axes instead of rifles—I am very willing, though, to be assured that it is quite the thing for guards in full uniform to carry axes on occasions. With children this taste for variety within uniformity usually carries through to the next stage of collecting, notably stamp-collecting, where series of stamps are so often identical in design or general layout but different in detail and colour.

The case of model railways may be

rather different, though I wonder whether they may not be a dynamic version of the same theme in terms of power and control. I may be prejudiced in favour of locomotives but I cannot help doubting whether toy cars, ships or aeroplanes can ever achieve an equal popularity: because with them power is not so satisfyingly or excitingly balanced by control. Almost the main point of a toy train is that it runs on lines, or off them. There is a story, which I believe to be true, though unverified, that Goering, that sinister man whose childishness included the possession of a splendid model railway, presented a similarly superb electric layout to a certain young foreign prince whom the Germans wished to cultivate. German technicians spent days in fitting it up for faultless and foolproof running. When all was ready, the prince was brought in and asked what railway evolution he would like to see. 'An accident,' he promptly replied: consternation among the technicians, who in their Teutonic thoroughness had provided for everything but that, the one thing that would wreck the elaborate circuits of their wiring-system. It is said, though, that the prince got his accident.

A model railway, more than any other toy, is a self-contained system, the articulation of a world in miniature. And these little worlds significantly tend to become more diminutive. Before the First World War, gauge 1 on the scale of ten millimetres to the foot was the most popular; later it became gauge O or a scale of seven millimetres; now the ascendancy has passed to the four-millimetre scale of gauge OO which originated as a German table-railway; and even this scale has lately been halved to almost thumbnail proportions. Partly, no doubt, this tendency, like most, springs from economic causes, from rising costs and, even more, smaller rooms in smaller houses. But economic causes, though rarely absent, are rarely absolute. In the present instance the inherent attraction of the miniature also exerts a powerful pull. Only to such a tiny scale as four millimetres is it possible to achieve the aesthetic perfection of such a system as that of the Reverend Edward Beal, a name to conjure with among those enthusiasts for whom model railways are miniature engineering so that, rather foolishly to my mind, they tend to get cross at the word 'toy'. However that may be, it is not by chance that the most enduring and endearing part of Gulliver's travels was his adventure in the land of Lilliput.

Excursions into Lilliput, while for children a way of getting on to terms with a larger order of existence, are for adults, no doubt, a pathetic form of escapism; though I am not clear why it should be so reprehensible to escape for a little from the atomic age. Here, too, the double implication of models comes in. For model can mean not only a reduced copy of, or design for, reality, but also a pattern of perfection, a model of virtue—in the words of the dictionary 'a summary, epitome, or abstract'. It could be this epitomising element of abstraction which supplies the master-clue to the secret fascination of the miniature. And that leads through to the secret of great art.

Each individual must to some extent inhabit a private world, and no other person, not even in love, can wholly lift that limitation from him. Such is the precarious condition of human existence. This individual incompleteness lends poignancy to diminutives, to fragile worlds in miniature pinpointed as projections of a more concentrated and more certain order, serenely sufficient. There, fleetingly, may one aspire.

'To see a World in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour.'

Mr. Eisenhower

WESLEY THURSTON

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It is probably not original to say that American political 'circuses' excite great interest over here if for no other reason than because many Britons feel uneasily grateful—as their reactions to these wild affairs have ever been yet another assurance against Britain becoming a republic.

The presidential campaign has also had the singular effect of making one candidate—hitherto all but a stranger—seem extremely attractive personally and politically, while alienating affections here for the other, who had previously been a great favourite in Britain.

As the former favourite won, it is important to list some of the reasons why there is justifiable puzzlement here, and everywhere, about the 'political character' of the President-Elect, and to venture a few conjectures as to how he will adjust to problems in 'the unholy office'.

Naturally, one discounts a large amount of the wordage fired about in the campaign because of obvious haste, and the sad need to speak for 'local consumption only', or to ensnare special groups. But it is surely clear to anyone who has studied the technique of U.S. presidential campaigns that there were several notable occasions when the psychology of Eisenhower-uninhibited-by-uniform was revealed, far beyond political verbiage, to be dismayingly Hooverian.

The occasion lingering most persistently here was that of Ike's formula for liberating peoples in the Russian sphere through outside aid—interpreted everywhere as meaning the fomenting of revolution. A nervous aftermath, despite fumbling attempts to withdraw this statement, showed in NATO circles a bewilderment among the twelve nations about the apparent disappearance of the Eisenhower who was famous for his patient negotiation. Then, the gratuitous comment that he had lived too long in nations where everyone is told what to do and think—confirmed later as a reference to his stay in England—made some neutrals wonder if their first estimate of the broadness of the man's mind might not, perhaps, have been an exaggeration. They coupled this with his jolly volunteering of the 'fact' that after all more than half the French are atheists.

Much more startling—at least for Whitehall and U.N.—was his pledge to tear up the Yalta Agreements. This, made as his personal, unilateral intent, opened the possibility that Eisenhower really has become so impatient that he would cause us to catapult into war over the status of the Eastern European peoples—for the only practical result of cancelling out Yalta could be the liberation of Poland. Here—as in the earlier 'liberate 'em' speech—one may try to flick it off as merely a demogogic appeal for the votes of millions of first and second generation immigrants from the nations of the Slav bloc.

Unfortunately, it cannot be dismissed so lightly, as will be shown when we examine the comments of one of his aides later.

Nor can we write off his proposal that U.N. should solve the Korea question by letting the South Koreans take over—pull out, and let 'Asiatics fight Asiatics', while piously remaining, morally, on the 'side of the right'.

Out of these examples of Eisenhowerana, comes the question: Will the thirty-third President bring, in January, to Washington and the Atlantic Community a mindful of such 'Blimpish' prejudices and choleric schemes? Or will he bring us again some of the reasoning which was behind his

remarkable Guildhall speech, and upon other occasions over here—when he seemed more statesman than soldier? Those who have studied Eisenhower's mind at close range (and this includes myself) have been saying for quite a long time that the man is an ultra-conservative; it was inevitable that he should be. Also, we have repeated that his apparent statesmanship when in uniform was natural to him and his regular service background; it was the 'woodshed diplomacy' built into the equipment of nearly every mature American officer who has had the heavy responsibilities of high command overseas. One should remember, too, that it is comparatively easy for a Supreme Commander to seem a little bit statesman-like: he unbends, expands, but knows he is invulnerable because of his uniform, so long as he does not make a fool of himself.

But such a toga-ed figure cannot put it to you that he would gladly vote for Gladstone: He is 'above politics'. When Eisenhower was drawn into politics, he seemed to put aside his military statesmanship, to try too hard in an attempt to merge his personality into that of 'the wrong Roosevelt'. Doubtless, the President-Elect will realise, now that he has been elected, that Americans cannot face backwards (with men directly descended from those who broke Teddy Roosevelt because he was a radical, who now regard Taft as leftish), while also looking ahead into this terrible jet-atomic age of power-politics-for-peace.

Those who come to rewriting the history of this era may record that Dwight Eisenhower became President despite himself, his frightening fumblings, reactionary alliances, his bellicosity, and his willingness to be convinced by a mob TV response of the moral solidity of Nixon, partially because the American people were even more frightened of not having a 'Father-leader'. It should also be noted that Adlai Stevenson seemed to be too much the intellectual visiting cousin for the basic psyche of the electorate—and a man with the temerity to use humour upon people who find themselves in 'a gloomy wood astray'.

Returning to the questions, Eisenhower is not a 'Colonel Blimp' type, nor is he anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, or anti-Negro; he is a man of extraordinarily high mental capacity—for work, for difficult problems, for reconciling the loose ends. But he is not broad-minded, and he likes action, rather than long deliberation. He can be quite Prussian in ruthlessness—or shall we say, quite Samurai, quite Sandhurst, quite West Point?

But he can never bring us again the reasoning behind the Guildhall talk, for, as Herbert Agar writes, it is not the same Ike. This is the President-Elect, a man more dramatically, perhaps tragically, a captive of his most recent experiences, and of the forces which moulded them, than any in recent history. And this circumstance has produced a natural combination. Over the military Ike, accustomed to being given a set of broad orders—a mandate—is now laid the politics-harassed and uncertain psychology of the sixty-two-year-old man for whom it is almost too late, this ambition to adjust, to lead factions toward peace who are not even sure they want peace, with a power bafflingly devoted to both peace and war. And so he embraces the patently dubious doctrines of 'liberation', and of McCarthyism; so he forgets the most endearing quality of his entire public character—loyalty—to endorse those who attack his mentor, Marshall, and to himself attack his former Commanders-in-Chief.

'The Boss is a disappointed, impatient man today,' writes one of Eisenhower's aides. 'He expected it to really be a crusade, that most Americans would rally to his colours. He is also worried about his capacity as a politician—national and world. He got no overwhelming mandate—the orders are not sharp and crisp, but vague and blotchy. You may yet see a return of the 'liberate 'em' formula—just to get something done dramatically, decisively, even if it means risking war, for a showdown on all sides may be in the cards. Such grand gestures might give him the rally.'

Against such dismal words one puts the Eisenhower genius for firm conciliation, for manly compromise, for generosity to the out-witted. There is no doubt that he

realises the seriousness of the wounds left gaping by the campaign. He will conciliate, and attempt to win over the millions who gave ardent support to Adlai Stevenson. He knows he must have at least the semblance of a united nation behind him as he faces the tasks of NATO and UN.

His flair for compromise will also be exerted on his own side of politics, for the shaky coalition which he now heads is in itself a task-making problem. Consider that, initially, his chief supporting group stood for the overthrow of the Old Guard, as did the resurgences of Willkie and Dewey: That means he heads the 'Young Turks' of progressivism. He fought for, and won much of, the vast independent vote; they must be bound to his side. Thirdly, he now represents the Old Guard, as well, as he compromised with Taft to get machine support. The last-named group contain the forces demanding the most expensive conciliation. They will dominate the Congress, speaking for the rabid subversion-hunters, for the high tariff crowd, for Hoover's Gibraltarism, even for the flint-axe men who follow MacArthur and Colonel McCormick.

President Eisenhower will have to stand before the people before many months have passed, and suggest a reduction of all types of 'foreign aid', military as well as economic. For, not since Senator Borah virtually dictated the foreign policies of Coolidge and Hoover, has there been such a heavy hand from the Senate in administration affairs. Borah was the man for whom they coined the phrase: 'He would rather be right than President.' Taft dearly wanted to be President. It is expected that the Cabinet posts now being allocated will be submitted to Taft in advance. Much the same sort of thing will be done in future months when difficult legislation is about to be prepared by administration lieutenants. For there is simply no sense in taking an issue to 'the Hill' unless there is some certainty of it being passed; without Taft it cannot be passed.

Second to the foreign aid programmes, tariffs. The elements who backed Taft would gladly re-erect around U.S. trade the Smoot-Hawley glacier. They are backed in turn by a complexity of lobbyists' interests, with taut wires running into almost every segment of the American economy—bringing the unhappy conclusion that the policy of 'trade-not-aid' which was promulgated in high Summer will more than likely be attenuated to one of 'little-aid-and-diminishing-trade.'

Naturally, none of these woeful developments can occur overnight.

Agreements already in force will be respected, appropriations of funds already voted upon, and committed, will continue to have validity—on through the fiscal year ending in June, and many for a year beyond.

It will be a staggered decline, if this sad compromise with the far right must be implemented as heavily as most observers fear it must. Meanwhile, there will be rays of hope. Many deals must be concluded; many horses must be swapped. Taft, after all, did not win the election single-handedly. The progressives will have a strong voice. The right-wing Democrats will endorse Eisenhower's struggle to stay in the centre of the path. And, at the risk of imitating his predecessor, Ike can always take his issues out into the country, 'back to the people', in an attempt to force the hands of the Old Guardsmen.

As an analyst of Washington politics for twenty years phrases it: 'This is a time for prayer and careful thought. He could be a great President. Let's start our prayers by hoping he will no longer be stampeded by the men who insist upon purely political expediency. His campaign to get there is over. Now he must campaign within himself to re-find the Eisenhower admired by the whole world not so long ago.'

The best way to silence a critic is to adopt his policy

The Case Marty-Tillon

STEPHEN W. POLLAK

SINCE the two veteran French Communist leaders, André Marty and Charles Tillon, were severely disciplined by the Party leadership and removed from the key positions which they had held for many years, much strangely-uninformed comment and speculation has appeared in the world Press. Thus it has been said that Tillon and Marty represented the 'tough' line in the French Communist Party and had to be eliminated when a new, 'soft' course was about to be initiated by Moscow. Nothing could be further from the truth, and it is well worth while to trace the Case Marty-Tillon back to its real origins.

The differences which led to the recent upheaval in the French Communist Party can, in fact, be traced back all the way to the last months of the war, when French Communism stood at the cross roads, having to choose between a course aiming at social revolution—for which many conditions were present and favourable in the last months of 1944—and a course of 'consolidation' within the framework of the Allied victory. Moscow then demanded the strict implementation of the Yalta decisions which had placed France in the Anglo-American zone of influence. Thorez returned home with instructions to participate in the de Gaulle coalition government, to disband and disarm the Partisan organisations and to help rebuild France—a 'bourgeois' France!

But it was far from easy to convince the French Communist workers of the 'correctness' of what most of them regarded as craven capitulation in the moment of *their* victory. Thousands opposed the official Party course openly, and many more in secret. And among the latter who objected to participation in the de Gaulle coalition was André Marty. In 1947, when the French Communist Party was expelled from the coalition government, Moscow's political prognosis of three years earlier was proved wrong—and Marty and Tillon could have said 'We told you so!' Only they didn't. At least not yet!

In 1947–8 the French Communist Party stood at a second turning-point of its strategy. The great wave of strikes had ended in failure. The Zhdanov Report at the first meeting of the Cominform demanded a radical leftward turn. The French reactionary forces were recovering from the blow which had been dealt to Vichy and its open and secret sympathisers, and were visibly gaining in strength and confidence. This was the moment Moscow chose to lay down its new 'ultra-left' course for its satellite parties abroad: social democracy was once more declared Enemy No. 1 rather than de Gaulle and the French bourgeoisie. This was an ominous repetition of the notorious 'third period' in the Germany of 1928–33, with its anti-social democratic slogan 'Down with Social Fascism!' which opened the gates to Hitler by destroying German Social Democrats. Today we know that this new round-about-turn dictated by Zhdanov was fiercely resisted by Marty who instead urged co-operation with the French Socialists to stem the swelling flood of reviving ultra-conservatism. This was rebellion No. 2!

In 1950–1 the third, decisive turn of the French Communist Party's post-war policy came about: the danger of a new world war seemed to grow daily with the Korean war and the realisation of an undisguised Western alliance directed against Russia in the shape of NATO. The French

Communists rallied round to the defence of the 'Socialist Fatherland'. The Stockholm Peace Congress presented them with two means of doing so: the collection of signatures for the outlawing of the Atom Bomb, and all-out propaganda for a Five-Power Pact. The logic expounded by the French Politburo sounded odd to many French Communists' ears: since United States imperialism is preparing war against the Soviet Union, we must make our peace with United States imperialism! There is no doubt that thousands of French Communists, nurtured for a generation on the theory of the total incompatibility of U.S. capitalism and Soviet Communism, found this logic rather a mouthful to swallow. We now know that Charles Tillon strongly advised against the signatures stunt: rebellion No. 3!

When the French Communist Party finally suffered its most serious reverse on the occasion of the anti-Ridgway demonstrations on May 28, and again when the protest strikes against the arrest of Jacques Duclos fizzled out, with barely ten per cent of the industrial workers taking part in them, the seed of rank-and-file criticism of the Party leadership, which the events of 1944 had sown in many minds and which had lain uneasily dormant for many years, brusquely began to revive. Discussion and arguments about the erroneous tactics of the Party could no longer be suppressed. The whole cumbersome Party machinery seemed to be getting out of control, not, ironically enough, thanks to any 'fractional activities' of Marty and Tillon, but as a result of an accumulation of mistakes stemming from the zig-zag course of a party desperately trying to steer a course between the aspirations of a politically-conscious French working class and the exigencies of Soviet power policy!

Marty and Tillon had for many years been urging a change of course, and it was the very course they had so consistently advocated in the inner councils of the Party, which at last, and belatedly, became the official Party gospel: to oppose, on a wide front, the dangerous growth of *domestic reaction* rather than continue to act as pawns in the changing fortunes of an *international cold war*. But the Communist 'apparat' considered this an opportune moment to strike against the two men who had time and again proved better tacticians—as far as their own country was concerned—than either Zhdanov or Malenkov. For it is a time-honoured Moscow manœuvre to silence a critic within the Party by taking over his policy! A new left turn decreed by Moscow has often before meant the downfall of the 'left fraction' (and vice versa) within the Party of another country. But, at the same time, this new 'struggle against fractionism' presented a very welcome opportunity to divert the rank-and-file's attention from the awkward events of May 28 and June 4. At the meeting of the Central Committee where he was put in the dock, Marty accused his accusers of having staged the whole affair to cast a smoke-screen over the Politburo's responsibility for its chaotic flounderings which, he said, had resulted in the virtual creation of two distinct policies continuously at cross-purposes with each other.

But despite this row, the French Communist Party, still the most powerful Party outside the U.S.S.R., will in all probability go on putting their duty to the Socialist Fatherland, on what they believe to be the eve of another war threatening the existence of the Soviet Union, before their internal differences. The French Communist Party has traditionally regarded it as its prime duty to do nothing which might possibly weaken the anti-capitalist forces. Therefore it appears likely that both Marty and Tillon, both of them far more popular than the remote Party theoreticians, may end by confessing all the sins of commission and omission with which they have been charged. For they, as well as their accusers, know that a split in the French Party would not only open the doors wide to de Gaulle but would also mean the end of the Party. The only undeniable outcome of the Case Marty-Tillon is that the myth of the 'monolithic' nature of the Party's Central Committee has been badly shaken in the eyes of thousands of French Communists who have never had reason to doubt it in the past.

The future of man as man depends on a rebirth of dialogue

Hope for this Hour

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We ask about hope for this hour. This implies that we, who ask, feel this hour to be not only one of the heaviest affliction but also one that appears to give no essentially different outlook for the future, no prospect of a time of radiant and full living. Yet it is such an outlook for a better hour that we mean when we speak of hope.

Only if the great need of men in this hour is really felt in common can our common question have a great common significance, and only then may it expect an answer which will show us a way. A hundred or a thousand men might come together and each bring with him the daily need of his own life, his wholly personal anxieties about the world and present-day life. Yet, even though each laid his need alongside the needs of the others, this would not produce a common need from which a genuine common question could arise. Only if to those who ask their personal need reveals the great need of man in this hour, can the rivulets of need, united into a stream, drive the stormy question upward.

What is of essential importance, however, is that we recognise not only the external manifestations of that common need which becomes perceptible to us, but also its origin and its depth. Important as it is that we suffer in common the human suffering of today, it is still more important to trace in common where it comes from. Only from there, from the source, can the true hope of healing be given us.

The human world is today, as never before, split into two camps, each of which sees the other as the embodiment of falsehood and itself as the embodiment of truth. Often in history, of course, national groups and religious associations have stood in so radical an opposition to each other that the one side denied and condemned the other in its innermost existence. Now, however, it is the human inhabitants of our planet generally who are divided, and with rare exceptions this division is everywhere seen as the necessity of existence in this world hour. He who makes himself an exception is suspected or ridiculed by both sides. Each side has taken possession of the sunlight and has plunged the opposite side into darkness, and each side demands that you decide between day and night.

We shall comprehend in its simplest lines the origin of this cruel and grotesque condition if we realise how the three principles of the French Revolution have broken asunder. The abstractions 'freedom' and 'equality' were held together through the more concrete 'fraternity', for only if men feel themselves to be brothers can they partake of a genuine freedom from one another and a genuine equality with one another. When the watchword 'fraternity' was deprived of its original Jewish-Christian meaning, the relationship between children of God, and consequently of any real content, each of the two remaining watchwords was able to establish itself against the other and to wander thereby further and further from its truth. Pompous and usurpatorial, each one mixed itself ever more thoroughly with elements foreign to it, elements of passion for power and greed for possession.

In such a situation man is more than ever inclined to see his own principle in its original purity and the opposing one in its present deterioration, especially if the

forces of propaganda confirm his instincts in order to make better use of them. Man is no longer, as in earlier epochs, content to take his own principle as the only true one and that which opposes it as utterly false. He is convinced that his side is in order, the other side fundamentally out of order, that he is concerned with the recognition and realisation of the right, his opponent with the masking of his selfish interests. In modern terminology, he believes that he has ideas, his opponent only ideologies. This conviction feeds the mistrust that reigns between the two camps.

During the First World War it became clear to me that a process was going on, which before then I had only surmised. This was the growing difficulty of genuine conversation, and more especially of genuine conversation between men of different kinds and convictions. Direct, open dialogue is becoming ever more difficult and more rare; the abysses between man and man threaten ever more pitilessly to become unbridgeable. I began to understand at that time, more than thirty years ago, that this is the central question for the fate of mankind. Since then I have continually pointed out that the future of man as man depends upon a rebirth of dialogue.

I therefore experienced great satisfaction when I read a short while ago the words in which a not just ordinarily competent man, Robert Hutchins, formulated the importance and possibility of a Civilisation of the Dialogue. 'The essence of the Civilisation of the Dialogue,' says Hutchins, 'is communication. The Civilisation of the Dialogue presupposes mutual respect and understanding, it does not presuppose agreement.' And further: 'It is no good saying that the Civilisation of the Dialogue cannot arise when the other party will not talk. We have to find the way to induce him to talk.' As the means to this, Hutchins recommends showing interest and understanding for that which the other has to say.

But there is an essential presupposition for all this: it is necessary to overcome the massive mistrust in others, and also in ourselves. I do not mean by this the primaeval mistrust, such as that directed against those with strange ways, those who are unsettled, and those without traditions, the mistrust that the farmer in the isolated farmstead feels of the tramp who suddenly appears. I mean the universal mistrust of our age. Nothing stands so much in the way of the rise of a Civilisation of Dialogue as the demonic power which rules our world, the demonry of basic mistrust. What does it help to induce the other to speak if basically one puts no faith in what he says? The meeting with him already takes place under the perspective of his untrustworthiness. And this perspective is not incorrect, for his meeting with me takes place under a corresponding perspective. The basic mistrust, coming to light, produces ground for mistrust, and so on and so forth.

It is important to perceive clearly how the specifically modern mistrust differs from the ancient mistrust, which is apparently inherent in human beings and which has left its mark in all cultures. There have always been countless situations in which a man in intercourse with a fellow man is seized with a doubt as to whether he can trust him, that is, whether the other really means what he says and whether he will do what he says. There have always been countless situations in which a man believed that his vital interest demanded that he suspect the other of making it his object to appear otherwise than he is. The first man must then be on his guard to protect himself against this threatening false appearance.

In our time something essentially different has been added that is far more capable of undermining the foundations of existence between men. No longer does one merely fear that the other will voluntarily dissemble; *one simply takes it for granted that he cannot do otherwise.* The presumed difference between his opinion and his statement, between his statement and his action, is here no longer understood as his intention, but as an inevitable necessity. The other communicates to me the perspective that he has acquired on a certain object, but I do not really take cognisance of his communication as knowledge. I do not take it seriously as a contribution to the

information about this object, but rather I listen for that which drives the other to say what he says, for an unconscious motive, say, or a 'complex'. He expresses a thought about a problem of life that concerns me, but I do not ask myself about the truth of what he says. I only pay attention to the question of which interest of his group has clothed itself in this apparently objective judgment. Since it is the idea of the other, it is for me only an 'ideology'. My main task in my intercourse with my fellow man becomes more and more, whether in terms of individual psychology or of sociology, to see through and unmask him. In the classical case this does not mean a mask he has put on to deceive me, but that, without his knowing it, a mask has been positively imprinted on him, so that what is really deceived is his own consciousness. In between there are, of course, innumerable transitional forms.

With this changed basic attitude, which has found scientific rationalisation in the teachings of Marx and Freud, the mistrust between man and man has become existential. And indeed in a double sense: It is, first of all, no longer the uprightness, the honesty of the other which is in question, but the inner agreement of his existence itself. Secondly, this mistrust not only destroys trustworthy conversation between opponents but also the immediacy of togetherness of man and man generally. Seeing-through and unmasking is now becoming the great sport, and those who practise it do not know where it entices them. Nietzsche knew what he did when he praised the 'art of mistrust', and yet he did not know. For this game naturally becomes complete as it becomes reciprocal, that means in the same measure as the unmasker himself becomes the object of unmasking. Hence one may foresee in the future a degree of reciprocity in existential mistrust where speech will turn into dumbness and sense into madness.

Man is still inclined to spare the other in order that he may himself be spared. For if he is also at times ready to put himself in question, he is generally able to stop in time. But the demonry is not to be trifled with. The existential mistrust is indeed basically no longer, like the old kind, a mistrust of my fellow man. It is rather the destruction of confidence in existence in general. That we can no longer carry on a genuine conversation from one camp to the other is the severest symptom of the sickness of present-day man. Existential mistrust is this sickness itself. But the destruction of trust in human existence is the inner poisoning of the whole human organism from which this sickness stems.

All great civilisation has been in a certain measure a Civilisation of the Dialogue. The vital substance of them all was not, as one customarily thinks, the presence of significant individuals, but their genuine intercourse with one another. Individuation was only the presupposition for the unfolding of dialogical life. What one calls the creative spirit of men has never been anything other than the address, the cogitative or artistic address, of those called to speak to those really able and prepared to hear. That which had concentrated here was the universal dynamism of dialogue.

There were, of course, in all times severe inner checks and disturbances; there was closed-ness and unapproachableness, dissembling and seduction. But where the human wonder bloomed, time and again, these checks and disturbances were always overcome through the elemental power of men's mutual confirmation. The one turned to the other as to a unique personal being, undamaged by all error and trouble, and received the other's turning to him. The one traced the other in his being, in that in him which survived all appearances, and even if they fought each other, they confirmed each other as that which they were. Man wishes to be confirmed by man as he who he is, and there is genuine confirmation only in mutuality.

Despite the progressive decline of dialogue and the corresponding growth of universal mistrust which characterise our time, the need of man to be confirmed still continues. But for the most part it no longer finds any natural satisfaction. As a result, man sets out on one of two false ways: he seeks to be confirmed either by himself or by a collective to which he belongs. Both undertakings must fail. The

self-confirmation of him whom no other being confirms cannot stand. With ever more convulsive exertions, he must endeavour to restore it, and finally he knows himself as inevitably abandoned. Confirmation through the collective, on the other hand, is pure fiction, for it belongs to the nature of the collective that it accepts and employs each of its members as this particular individual, constituted and endowed in this particular way, but cannot recognise anyone in his own being and therefore independently of his usefulness for the collective. Modern man, in so far as he has surrendered direct and personal mutuality with his fellows, can only exchange an illusory confirmation for the one that is lost. There is no other salvation than through the renewal of the dialogical relation, and this means, above all, through the conquest of existential mistrust.

Where must the will to this conquest begin? More exactly, from what spiritual position is the man for whom existential mistrust has already become the gateway into intercourse with his fellow man to be brought to self-criticism in this all-important matter? It is a position which can be described as criticism of criticism. The point in question is to show up a fundamental and enormously influential error in all the theories of 'seeing-through' and 'unmasking'. The essence of the error is this: when an element in the psychical and spiritual existence of man, which formerly was not or was too little noticed, is now uncovered or clarified, one identifies it with man's total structure instead of inserting it in this structure. A leading methodological postulate of all anthropological knowledge, in the broadest sense of the term, must be that each newly uncovered and newly clarified element should be investigated in terms of its importance in relation to the other elements, which are already in some measure known and elucidated, and in terms of its reciprocal action with them. The decisive questions must be: What proportion exists between it and the others? In what measure and in what way does it limit them and is it limited by them? In which dynamism of the different historical and individual genetic moments of human existence is it to be included?

The first task of science must accordingly be at any given time to draw demarcation lines for the validity of theses which may be postulated about the newly discovered or newly clarified element, that is, determine within which spheres it may claim validity. The theories of seeing-through and unmasking, both the psychological and the sociological, have neglected to draw these lines and have time and again reduced man to the elements that have been uncovered. Let us consider as an example the theory of ideologies, according to which the views and judgments of a man belonging to a particular social class are to be examined essentially as products of his class position, that is, in connection with the action of his class for the furtherance of its interests. Were the problem of class status and its influence stated with all clarity, the first scientific question would have to be: since man is set in his world as in a manifold connection of influencing spheres, from the cosmic to the erotic, as one of which spheres the social level appears, what is the weight of the ideological class influence in relation to the non-ideological constitution of the person, and what is their effect on each other? (In this connection it should be noticed that the influence of social levels, as we know, is in no way a simply positive one, for the rebellion against the class to which one belongs not infrequently proves stronger than the tendency to conformity, and thus the idea stronger than the ideology.) For the time being, of course, the answer to such questions can only be set as a goal for scientific thought. But the setting of this goal is an essential precondition for the rightness of this thought.

Instead of this, the theories of ideology have reduced the man who holds opinions and formulates judgments to the ideological. This boundless simplification has contributed decisively to the development of existential mistrust. If we wish to overcome this mistrust, we cannot go back into an uncritical acceptance of men's statements. We must go beyond our present position by setting ever more exact

measure and limits to the ideological critique. What I mean is not a vague idealism, but a more comprehending, more penetrating realism, a greater realism, the realism of a greater reality. Man should not be seen through, but he should be perceived ever more completely in his openness and his hiddenness and in the relation of the two to each other. We wish to trust him, not blindly indeed, but clear-sightedly. We wish to perceive his manifoldness and his wholeness, his proper character, without any preconceptions about this or that background, and with the intention of accepting, accrediting, and confirming him to the extent that this perception will allow.

Only if this happens, and in so far as it happens, can a genuine dialogue begin between the two camps into which mankind today is split. They who will begin must have overcome in themselves the basic mistrust and be capable of recognising in their partners the reality of their being. And it is obvious that these will not be men who speak merely in their own names. Behind them will be divined the unorganised group of those who feel themselves represented through them. This is an entirely different kind of representation and representative body from the political. These must be men who are not bound by the aims of the hour, but are gifted with the free farsightedness of those whom the unborn call; independent persons with no other authority than that of the spirit. Today, as we know, the spirit has less authority than ever, but there are times in which, despite all, the authority of the spirit suffices in order to undertake the rescue of man, and such an hour appears to me to draw near.

The representatives of whom I speak will be acquainted with the true needs of their own people, and for these needs they will be willing to stake themselves. But they will also turn understandingly to the true needs of other peoples and will know in both cases how to extract the true needs from the exaggerations. Just for that reason they will unrelentingly distinguish between truth and propaganda within what is called the opposition of interests. Only when out of the alleged amount of antagonisms just the real conflicts between genuine needs remain, can the consideration of the necessary and possible settlements between them begin. The question from which one must proceed will be this, apparently simplest of all and yet inviting many difficulties: What does man need, every man, in order to live as man? For if the globe is not to burst asunder, it must be given to every man what he needs to live as man. Coming to one another out of the camps, those who stand in the authority of the spirit will dare to think with one another in terms of the whole planet.

What will prove stronger in the last instance, man's common trust of existence or mutual mistrust? Even if these representatives, in whom I hope, should be found, their success will depend on those represented, on their unreserved honesty, their goodwill with its hostility to empty phrases, their courageous personal engagement. From this element alone on earth can the power that the representatives need stream toward them. The hope for this hour depends on the hopers themselves, upon ourselves. I mean by this: upon those among us who feel most deeply the sickness of present-day man and who speak in his name the word without which no healing takes place: I will live.

The hope for this hour depends upon the renewal of dialogical immediacy between men. But let us look beyond the pressing need, the anxiety and care of this hour. Let us see this need in connection with the great human way. Then we shall recognise that the immediacy is injured not only between man and man, but also between the being called man and the source of existence. At its core the conflict between mistrust and trust of man conceals the conflict between mistrust and trust of eternity. If our mouths succeed in genuinely saying *Thou*, then, after long silence and stammering, we shall have addressed our eternal *Thou* anew. Reconciliation leads toward reconciliation.

Lamp-Posts

A Letter from

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS, M.P.

THE last years have brought many improvements in lighting, and the traffic problem has compelled in many places the erection of much new lighting as the price that we pay for safety on the roads and for the welfare state. The Gillingham Report can leave us in no doubt that yet more street-lighting is still urgently necessary. The scarcity of metals has made necessary the concrete lamp-post. Things being as they are, it is idle to complain either that there are more lamp-posts or that iron and steel cannot be spared for the building of them. But we can complain that so little trouble has been taken to solve the aesthetic problems which they raise. The Ministry of Transport's Departmental Committee Report of 1937 divides columns into two sorts—Group A and Group B. Group A columns are those which are found in main roads and have their lamps twenty-five feet from the ground. Group B columns are in side roads with lamps not more than fifteen feet from the ground. Among Group B columns the most common is the Avenue, a straight, thin concrete column, with a head that is called a 'swan-neck', but which is in fact more like a sickle, or with a clumsy extension at the top, consisting of a curve jutting out at about 135 degrees, from which the lamp is suspended. On traffic islands we often find what is called 'the improved refuge' lighting column, the Gowshall, which consists merely of a tall tubular pole, on top of which is an illuminated opal globe. It has little to recommend it either in function or in calligraphy, as, besides looking ungainly, it dissipates its light into the sky instead of throwing it down on to the street where it is required. The cry for economy has killed the variety of design which flourished with such vigour in Victorian England, and more and more completely the market is now coming to be dominated by a single stock, mass-produced hexagonal tapered post, chosen because it is cheap to produce, because the moulds for forming it meet at the natural edges and because any sort of lantern or fluorescent fitting can be put on to it as may be found convenient. There is a stock pattern with which we are all familiar in town after town of modern Britain, in which the lamp droops over like a concrete snow-drop. Or, where we do not have the snow-drop, there stands out from it a line of light, which looks, as Mr. John Betjeman has said, like a carpet-sweeper. This stock pattern is thrown indiscriminately upon the market, with no question asked into what sort of town it is to be placed, and any borough surveyor or Council which wants any modification of design has, of course, at first to meet the objection that 'it costs more'. There is much the same condition of mass production in steel tube and alloy columns, and the tapered tubular columns, which we find on the Continent, are not available here.

The story of the English lamp-post is a fascinating, if melancholy, story. For the details of it the lamp-post-minded are dependent on its greatest authority, Mr. Peter Varnon. The story over a hundred and thirty years is beyond question a story in which quantity has multiplied and quality decayed. It is with the moral to be drawn from that story that I am mainly concerned. Has the decay been inevitable? Our society is, it is true, a different society from that of George IV, and these are

times when it would be hardly possible to leave the fashioning of each lamp-post to the whim of the nobleman who happened to live nearest to it. A degree of standardisation was inevitable. Yet here, as in many other departments of our public life, what is called planning is in fact the exact opposite of planning. If some municipal officer, subject to democratic control, were to take his decision on the shape of his town's lamp-posts, if a plebiscite of his townsmen were to have the right to approve or to reject his design, the results might be good or bad, might be better or worse, but at least it is important to understand that that is exactly the opposite of what happens today. What happens today is that Devizes and Stalybridge, Slough and Wantage, Manchester and Salisbury—towns as utterly diverse in geography, architecture and purpose as could be imagined—all have imposed upon them, willy-nilly, the same pattern of lighting. It is as much the negation of planning as it is the negation of art. We are commonly told that this standard design carries with it the general approval of the Fine Art Commission, which is complacently content that it be erected everywhere. But Lord Crawford in his statement of August 1950 showed how far was the Fine Art Commission from being satisfied with what was happening. Lord Crawford said:

> 'The standards now being erected throughout the country have caused the Commission much concern. Of the many designs submitted for them, few have met with approval . . . The Commission has confined its activities to "passing", often only after considerable modifications, those which avoided the worst faults . . . But even if standards are well designed for trunk roads, they may look grotesque in different surroundings.'

There is doubtless a type of mind to which it is convenient that there should be only one sort of lamp-stand. There is a type of mind to which it is convenient that there should only be one sort of poem. Yet it has been generally thought that European civilisation has been somewhat the richer for the variety which it has gained through having different poets writing different poems. Our variety has been both a product and a cause of our vitality, and so until recently the European traveller has found a large part of his pleasure in travel from the differences in architecture and design between one place and another. Even where there has not been any better or worse, at least the difference has been in itself a refreshment. The costing officer tells us which sort of lighting is immediately the cheaper. The safety officer tells us under which sort of lighting accidents are immediately the less frequent. It is important to know such things. But must we not also consider what effect crude light and colour and monotonous design have upon men's spirits and their philosophy, what contribution they make to the growing doubt of the age, whether life is worth living or whether the furniture of the age is worth preserving?

Now it is, of course, true that by misfortune the era of planning has coincided with an era of harsh problems of finance, of shortage of raw materials and of difficulties in the balance of payment. That was in no way a part of the plan of the original planners. William Morris imagined that his planned society would be also an abundant society, a society in which people would be free to help themselves to all the beautiful things that took their fancy and in which the careless exuberance of the Regency nobleman would be not so much curbed as extended to all the population. Perhaps the very title of his *News from Nowhere* carried with it his warning that he himself understood that his full dream was too good to be true.

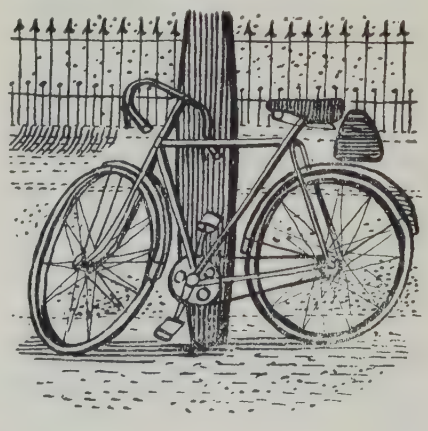
However that may be, we have, alas, like Harriet Martineau, to 'accept the universe', to take facts as they are. These unpleasant problems, such as the problems of the balance of payment, are with us and cannot be ignored. But, although it is perfectly true that economy does demand a certain limitation on the number of designs, it does not demand an absolute limitation to one. There comes a point beyond which mass-production ceases to be an economy. It would cost more money if every house in the country differed from every other house. It would not save money if every house were exactly the same. So

long as you can give enough work to keep your tools and machines occupied, you waste no money by having your tools sometimes differently shaped and your machines differently geared, and, indeed, it is evident, in the world of lamp-posts, as in other worlds, that, although the passion for uniformity is first raised in the name of economy, its cause is before long fostered by those who love uniformity for its own sake and who come in the end sometimes to impose uniformity even when it is against the interests of economy.

In the world of art and architecture many unlovely things have been done in the name of economy, but many lovely things have been done as well. There are many examples where an overlaid and ungainly design has been found too expensive, and where the artist who has been instructed to solve a financial problem and produce a cheaper article, doing so, has also solved an aesthetic problem, has freed his design from some evil and encumbering tradition that has grown upon it and has produced something that is more lovely as well as cheaper. Our times have produced examples of this in the world of lamp-columns. If we look at the pleasant, natural calligraphic curve of the columns that stand today on Waterloo Bridge, it is hard to think that anyone would prefer to them the harsh angular columns of the standard type. Yet apparently the pleasing curves of the present lamps are only temporary and are due to be replaced by the uglier standard-types as soon as there are uglier ones available. Such a replacement has already taken place in Parliament Square. The temporary standards erected there immediately after the war were, it may be, too simple and unpretentious for such a position. But they were at least inoffensive and far better than the so-called 'permanent' horrors by which they have been supplanted at the cost of the tax-payer and the rate-payer. What reason is there why almost all modern lamp-columns should be disfigured by an ill-proportioned over-thick 'match-strike' base? The size and shape of the base can have no bearing on the efficiency of the lighting.

Some towns, such as Newbury and Bath, have solved their problem in these days of iron-shortage by dispensing with columns

altogether and hanging their lamps by iron-brackets from their high buildings. A slight relaxation in the rigidity of the regulations about distance between lamp and lamp would make this possible in many other places. This strange civilisation of ours lavishes money, on a scale that any other age would have grudged to temples and king's palaces, on the ephemeral sets of its films for whom a life of more than a few months is not intended, and grudges the smallest expenditure on such simple articles of street furniture as lamp-posts, which are likely to last for a generation or two and remain to our children as a monument what sort of men we were. Nor is there even any question of expense in the preference of the angle to the simple curve. The one is as cheap to produce as the other, and it is hard not to think that the preference for the uglier springs from that nihilistic spirit which is to be found in so many places in the modern world and which is not merely indifferent, but positively hostile, to beauty—from a positive cult of ugliness for ugliness' sake. Let us be prepared to take a little trouble to make our streets more gracious.



American Poets since the War

DONALD HALL

Born in Connecticut in 1928, Mr. Hall graduated from Harvard in 1951 and is now at Christ Church, Oxford, where he recently won the Newdigate Poetry Prize

THE history of American poetry, until recently, has been of hermitage and exile, or of self-conscious nationalism. Its greatest age saw T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound leave their country to live abroad, the one to become an English publisher in Bloomsbury, returning to the country of his birth only on lecture tours; the other an Italian Fascist and paranoid—coming back to the United States under guard to stand trial for treason, but untried and locked up in an asylum for the insane. The same age had William Carlos Williams, a general practitioner in New Jersey, bringing poetic nationalism to such an extreme that the writing of a sonnet by an American was literary betrayal; and Wallace Stevens, a Vice-President of Hartford Accident and Indemnity Insurance Company, was hiding behind his desk and name-plate the mind of a poet concerned with the intertwisting of imagination and reality.

The newest generation of American poets seems generally different; now the young poet visits Europe when he or the Guggenheim Foundation can afford it, but he seldom lives there. Dunstan Thompson and W. S. Merwin live in England; Robert Lowell has travelled much on the Continent recently; no other names come to mind. The franc is not so cheap as it was in the twenties, and the crash destroyed many of the accumulated fortunes of America, lessening the number of people living on an unearned income: both of these facts may account in some part for the change, but the situation of the poet in America has changed so greatly that it is plausible to assume other causes at work, restraining the former urge to exile.

Eliot and Pound were driven to Europe for the best of reasons; they could write poetry better there. But the conditions which sent them away no longer exist, and if they were young men in America today, they would probably not feel it necessary to leave. Poetry in America has become the object of respect. No longer is the coterie lacking, without which a poet starves for technical conversation. Thirty years, and the return of most of the many self-exiles, has worked its change.

The conditions of poetry-writing are public, esoteric and private. The private conditions depend in part upon the others, and where they do not, cannot be discussed in generalities. The conditions of coterie are simply that for most poets it is necessary to have an audience of a few friends or peers whose ideas can be respected. And this now exists in various centres throughout the United States. But it is the public conditions which are the most open to satire, and at the same time the most important, since it is by these that the poet earns his daily bread and is able to walk down the street and feel the respect—however grotesquely motivated—of other men.

The poet in America today is the beneficiary of an enormous culture-hunt, the same which sends so many Americans to these shores every year, armed with camera and guide-book. The poet tends to laugh at the greedy millions who swallow *The Cocktail Party* whole, and do not even taste the sugar coating, but their fascination is valuable to him. They will come to lectures, occasionally buy books, and they will read magazines which print his verse and pay him well for it; he is convinced that they

don't understand a line, but their money helps to pay the bills. Above all, he is hired by their universities.

The American universities have adopted the function of patrons of the arts, much the same as the B.B.C. here. College faculties are studded with Creators. There are two thousand institutions of would-be higher learning in the United States with Departments of English, and most of them want, and many of them have, a real, live poet. He may be a balding man who has published one sequence in *Poetry Chicago*, but he is a Poet, and his students will boast about him. If a man has published a book of poems, he can almost certainly get a job at some sort of a university. He may be asked to teach writing, which means that he will have to read and grade the usually wretched lucubrations of undergraduates aspiring to be 'writers', a word of glamour and excitement in the United States. Some writer-teachers complain that the study of sophomoric quatrains prevents them writing a line; but if they choose to remain on salary, they must attempt to teach; the modern patron, like the ancient, demands his pound of flesh. And the poet—liking the long vacations and literate surroundings—continues to accept the bargain; in John Ciardi's recent anthology, *Mid-Century American Poets*, are fifteen young poets; ten are now teaching in universities, two of the others have stopped only recently.

Not all universities ask the writer to work so hard or so meaninglessly as I have described. Many faculties include teaching fellowships or professorships specially designed to give the writer time to work at his trade. The important point is that each man is given his position *as a writer*, and for that alone; it is nothing but patronage.

The hard-luck stories of the writers of the twenties have probably been a cause of the change; left-over sentimentality is being wasted on the young poet of today, who has little reason to feel himself exiled, peculiar, or destined to starve because of the public attitude towards his craft. Poets are, as always, inclined to be eccentric folk—it would be scandalously untraditional if the magnifying glass of their craft did not uncover within themselves malignant growths—but the reasons today must be more inward than they were, of necessity, thirty years ago.

The writer on the faculty of the university is responsible for several new and strange things, but perhaps the strangest is the writing course; an Occupational School in *belles lettres*. They are not quite so silly as they sound, since few students or teachers believe writing can be taught; the courses give the undergraduate more time to spend on his writing, and the stimulation of contact with a man who has come through, who is 'a writer'. The writer may not be a very good one, but for an aspirant of eighteen the first mark of distinction is publication—the features of excellence or mediocrity can be made out later. The writing course gives the undergraduate the kind of audience for whom he must learn to write if he is to write well, and I think it raises standards at least occasionally.

There are other results to the poet himself. In current books of American poetry there are many poems called by such titles as, 'To My Students', 'A Walk Through the Campus', 'Football Game', and, 'To a Friend who has Just Passed the Oral Examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy'. I do not really believe that such surface academicism is significant; poems about cafés in St. Germain des Près can be just as good, or just as bad, as poems about the subway kiosk in Harvard Square. No major talent will find itself restricted for subject-matter by its surroundings.

The presence of poets at the universities attracts other poets to university towns. Cambridge, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston where Harvard University is situated, is the nucleus of many poets teaching at Harvard or other nearby universities, or simply living in town. The largest American cities, with their universities, theatres, and other attractions, draw many poets. New York, of course, and Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco have large poetic coteries.

In America today there is much sitting-at-the-feet. In England it has seemed to me that until a writer is beginning to be established, he is apt to consort only with

writers his own age; but in America the poet is less apt to know a horde of other young writers than he is to work under one particular man, or a small group of men. The fact that poets are teachers accounts in part for this phenomenon; a young man straight from school is apt to throw himself prostrate before the first pair of literary feet he spies. Often at the larger universities one small group of writers will cluster around one faculty poet, another group around another. It is not at all confined to the classroom. A young man of some talent will have his poems read by two or three faculty members and two or three local poets not connected with the university—if he is fortunate enough to attend a large and metropolitan university. He is likely to come to know some established poets well, and to spend much time with them, arguing and talking about poetry in the classic manner apparently indispensable to most poets.

Some of the best young poets have graduated through the tutorial of different men into their present individuality and excellence. Robert Lowell left Harvard after a year and studied under John Crowe Ransom at Kenyon. After a time he left and went to work on poetry under Allen Tate; several years later, with the publication of *Lord Weary's Castle*, he became the best-regarded poet of his generation. Imitation is not the result of tutorial; Lowell resembles neither Ransom nor Tate. The result seems to be a confidence and an enthusiasm of dedication to craft that is imparted from poet to poet by a kind of laying on of hands.

Many are the results to poetry of the culture-hunt. *Time* Magazine has put T. S. Eliot and Robert Frost on its cover—but has nullified any hint of taste by according the same honours to Christopher Fry. *Time* has featured articles on the poets pictured, and on the work of Wallace Stevens and others, but as usual the popular press is thirty years out of date; *Time*, which printed reports of a hoax when *The Waste Land* was first published, under-rates the younger poets, and indeed has ridiculed them for being teachers.

The incidence of poetry readings has increased enormously. Many universities and civic organisations have special funds for readings by poets of their own work—another source of revenue. There is, of course, a great demand for imported British poets to make the Grand (coast to coast) Tour, reading verse. In particular, Dylan Thomas is the subject of an appetite which can only remind one of the recent hunger of the bobby-soxers for Frank Sinatra. Other British poets have toured and read, often with success.

Sales of books of poetry are not sufficient to make publishers search the classroom for new poets, as they do for novelists, but are usually enough to yield a profit. In England, sales are below the pre-war level, when they were low enough to be the subject of alarm; even Faber publishes less and less poetry by unrecognised writers. I have heard one publisher say that a sale of three hundred copies of a new book is not abnormally low. In the United States one very small New York publisher started a series of books by young poets, none of whom was among the best-known post-war poets; by keeping a low overhead, they managed to make a sale of six hundred copies their break-even point. In only one case in the first eight books of the series did the company fail to make a profit. When Richard Wilbur published his first book, *The Beautiful Changes*, he was scarcely known, since he had published very little in the periodicals; yet his first volume sold out its first edition in a year. Last year I tried to buy a copy of Theodore Roethke's new *Praise to the End*, which had been published only three or four months, and was told that I would have to advertise for it. Of course the huge population of the United States, relative to Great Britain, would imply that more good poetry should be sold there, but such has not always been the case.

There is a wealth of literary magazines in the United States, from mimeographed broadsheets to the *Kenyon Review*. What is astonishing is that so many of them pay for contributions, and some quite well. The best literary and critical journals are the *Kenyon Review*, the *Hudson Review*, the *Partisan Review*, the *Sewanee Review*, the *Yale Review*, the *Hopkins Review*, and the *Western Review*. Myriad poetry magazines and

lesser quarterlies crowd the more literary bookshops. And some of the slicker, commercial magazines pay well for good poetry too. The *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, and the *New Yorker* are outstanding, particularly the last. There, along with verse by less-known poets, appear Auden, Graves, Shapiro, MacNeice, Ciardi, Wilbur, Brinnin, Humphries, Moss, and Roethke. And the wage is extraordinarily high.

The sale of recordings by poets reading their own verse promises to be a financial boon of the future. The only commercial recording which I know at the moment—besides Edith Sitwell's 'Façade'—is a long-playing record of Dylan Thomas reading his own verse. But there are many records available, for purchase, through Harvard Vocarium, other educational outlets, and above all the Library of Congress, which has issued in the past few years ten albums of modern poets reading their own verse, including eight volumes of miscellaneous poets and one volume each accorded entirely to T. S. Eliot and Robert Frost.

* * *

Much of the credit for the changed state of poetic affairs in America must be laid to the activities of the men of the twenties who returned from Europe and chastised the country for neglecting its artists. One would think that the universities in particular had developed guilt-feelings about the matter, for they have very nearly become over-protective. There are some who think that the poet is having too easy a time of it, or at least that his poetry is greatly inferior to the poetry of thirty years ago. For most among these critics of the younger American poets are academicians whose trade it is to praise the writers of the twenties, and who can see no further stylistically than *The Waste Land*. It is not surprising that *vers librists* should find little to praise in the newest generation, since *vers libre* is not employed by the younger poets.

The only major writer who attacks the contemporary movement is William Carlos Williams, and he is too intelligent a man not to discern the excellence of the best young poets. His attacks are theories, and read like a nationalist imagist manifesto. Williams complains that Americans writing verse do not use the American language; the iamb is old-fashioned, and British; repetitive metres, and the sonnet, above all, are the subject of his scorn. Only a small group of poets, Charles Olson and Robert Creeley among them, continue to fight Williams's battles—battles fought and won twenty years ago. Not only did the poet of the twenties and earlier have the public problem of being a poet in America; he had the stylistic problem of injecting vigour into the material of an art form nearly dead; so he was savage, and tore and ripped into language until, at his best, it became bare, hard and accurate. But now the materials of the art form are revitalised, and there is no more reason to avoid what were the companions, not the causes, of the decay, the ornaments of rhyme and metre.

The twenties are repudiated only stylistically, and only on the surface of style; no young poet lacks respect for the achievements of Eliot, Pound, Williams, and the others; he simply does not choose to write like them. There are no Georgians and no genteel tradition hanging over the heads of American poets, to be repudiated; one is free to be as poetic as one wishes. The twenties have freed the young poet from the necessity of being *against* a bad discipline, even more than they have shown a new discipline which can be exploited successfully. Now Richard Wilbur and many others are writing elegantly and wittily in close, repeated stanzas; Lowell is using the enjamed pentameter couplet more brilliantly than anyone since Keats, and is writing excellent narrative verse in irregularly-rhymed pentameter stanzas.

In England poetry comes more and more to resemble the loose rhythms of the Four Quartets (but most of it is not nearly so disciplined as the original); there seems to be a pervasive loosening of the line, an arrangement which allows for auditory subtleties and is excellent for argumentative verse, but which lacks the emotive force of a strong beat, or the grace of a well-turned stanza. Poets in England are caring more about their ideas, less about their words; in America the technical discipline of craftsmanship seems

often to be uppermost in the poet's mind. It seems to me probable that the two literatures are moving apart; though what I have described may very well be only a temporary phenomenon, and is a generalisation to which there are many exceptions on both sides of the Atlantic.

The increasing barrenness of poetry in England (*not* in Wales) does not seem to me classical; it is more mediaeval: argumentative, allegorical. The elegant stanzas of Wilbur and some others in the United States could perhaps be described as neo-classical; Lowell and Roethke, too, resemble poets of the eighteenth century—in organisation and idea—but of the latter half rather than the earlier; more Christopher Smart or William Blake.

It is not enough merely to state that American poetry is becoming increasingly ornamental, and has repudiated the *vers librists* on the level of style, without guessing at the cause. It seems to me, in direct contradiction to William Carlos Williams, that the American language is characteristically highly ornamental—and not at all hard and bare as the imagists wanted it to be; it is often irrelevantly extravagant in its use of rhyme; in its punning and playing with words, one is reminded of the Elizabethan manner. Rhyme is the cornerstone of clever adolescent conversation in the United States. 'What's buzzin, cousin?' must be as much of a cliché here now as it has been for some time across the Atlantic; similar phrases are plentiful. It must be difficult for an Englishman to understand—living in a country which values understatement—that ornament and hyperbole (the main device of American speech) are not Hollywood inventions, but the spontaneous creation of American civilisation. Such language is not only used by high-school students, though the more violent ornamentation is mostly the work of the young; university students have their pet names for landmarks; the girls at Radcliffe College have named a nearby restaurant 'the clean green' (a literary girl tried to rename it the 'clean, well-lighted', but the allusion did not stick). The process is continual; in the conversation of a clever young man, rhymes, alliteration, and of course, tall-tale hyperbole may so dominate the sense as to intimidate it thoroughly.

The milieu for the poet in the United States has improved both as to public and coterie; and combined with this is a prevalent excitement of language and a practical system of patronage. The mixture would seem excellent, and the pot ready to boil; but prediction of a poetic renaissance to dwarf the twenties would be *hubris* of overwhelming dimensions. The proof will lie in the poetic pudding, and much of real value has been accomplished already.

This article will be continued in the January issue of World Review, *and will examine the poetry produced in America since the war.*

Recent Ceramic Art

The recent trend in Ceramic Art moves directly away from the inspiration provided by Oriental tradition. This inspiration which has provided an austerity of form and colour in pottery for the past thirty years is no longer in keeping with present trends in architecture and interior design.

The wit and gaiety of the English tradition is reasserting itself and is encouraged by the experimental work being done on the Continent. The forms in pottery are being explored through experiments in ceramic sculpture, strictly limited by the shapes it is possible to make on the wheel. The affinity, between these shapes and African sculpture, arises from the cylindrical limitations of the wheel and the tree, as much as from modern interest in primitive art. The primitive Chinese goat udder pot is the forerunner of the recent idea of tip-toed elevated tensions apparent in modern pottery, architecture and furniture.

A vigorous decoration replaces the lifelessness of the printed rosebud and the emptiness of merely facile brush-strokes, giving a richness of texture and colour reminiscent of Persian ceramics and the stained glass of Chartres. New and exciting decoration has been evolved in ceramics which suggest a greater use in architecture and interior decoration.

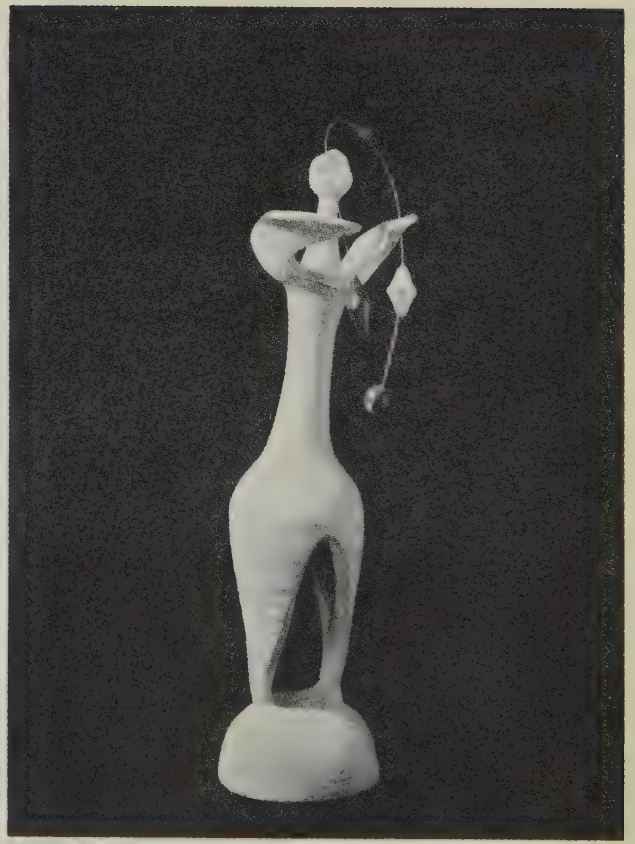
WILLIAM NEWLAND

Recent Ceramic Art

WILLIAM NEWLAND — *Wheel made horse and birds. Blue and red decoration*

WILLIAM NEWLAND — *Slipware Bull. Made on the potter's wheel, the horns and tail pulled out of wet clay*

NICHOLAS VERGETTE *Unglazed thrown figure. Buff clay, red and black decoration*



NICHOLAS VERGETTE *Wood ash stoneware figure; thrown on the wheel*

MARGARET HINE — *Earthenware Plate. Lemon yellow and black underglaze*

WILLIAM NEWLAND — *Stoneware jugs and slipware plate*

Grinning Mask (Red and White on dark ground)
46 cm. from Lötschental

Punch (Red and White on Black) 46 cm. from Lötschental

Below:
Böögg from Kriens (Brown, Red and Black)

Below: *Witch Mask (Red, Brown and White on Black)*
34 cm. by A. Willi, Ems

The Rietberg Museum at Zürich

HEIDI HEIMANN

THE news that this year a new museum had been opened at Zürich aroused only mild interest. The inexplicit name *Rietberg* Museum, however, covers a highly emotional past and a most exotic present. In both respects the new museum is of far more than local interest; it is, in fact, quite unique and of European importance. The house where it is installed was formerly the Villa Wesendonck *auf dem grünen Hügel* on the outskirts of Zürich, a place well-known to music lovers and Wagner enthusiasts; the collection now assembled there belongs to Dr. Eduard v.d. Heydt and is famous among art experts in Europe and America for its rare and exquisite treasures.

Just over one hundred years ago, in 1851, Wagner met the Wesendoncks at Zürich. Wagner, who had been involved in the revolution of 1849 in Saxony and had had to leave that country, was then living in Switzerland as a political exile. He was thirty-eight years old; Otto Wesendonck was two years younger, his wife Mathilde thirteen years younger than her husband. Both were Germans from the Lower Rhine and they had been married for three years. They were a wealthy, highly-educated couple, genuinely interested in literature, music and the arts. Wesendonck had chosen to live in Zürich because, as partner of a New York firm of silk merchants, it was a convenient European centre for him. The previous winter they had attended a concert conducted by Wagner, were deeply impressed by his interpretation of a symphony by Beethoven, and wished to make the conductor's acquaintance. A friendship between them and Wagner developed and, as was the case with most of Wagner's friends—certainly with the wealthy ones—their financial help was asked, and generously given. Wagner was then working on *Der Ring der Nibelungen*, living in most unsuitable lodgings: five pianos and one flute were played within earshot and made concentration almost impossible. For some time he had been looking round for a little house in its own grounds, so far without success. The Wesendoncks lived at the famous Hôtel Baur au Lac and were trying to find a large freehold to build themselves an appropriate home. In 1855 Wesendonck bought a wide tract of land on a ridge separating Zürich from the Sihltal and started immediately to lay out a spacious garden, planting many foreign trees. A small garden house, separated from the main plot only by a lane, happened to be available; this was purchased as well and let by Wesendonck to Wagner for life for a nominal rent. Wagner's joy knew no bounds; with immense enthusiasm he threw himself into the re-fitting and decoration of his little *Asyl*. It was ready by Easter of 1857 and he and his wife Minna moved in. Enchanted with his new surroundings, and enjoying the undisturbed peace of his garden with the wonderful view, Wagner was convinced he had settled for life.

The large villa, on the nearby hill, which Wesendonck erected for himself and his family, was finished in the summer of the same year. Between the two houses, constant, often daily, visits were exchanged; dinner parties, music performances and readings were arranged. The mutual attraction between Wagner and Mathilde Wesendonck grew perceptibly, and found its sustenance in the sharing of these diverse activities. We know little of the growth of Mathilde's feelings—her letters are not preserved, whereas his are—but from her pictures, her later memoirs and especially the five poems written by her

during the winter of 1857–8 and immediately put to music by Wagner, we may guess the strength as well as the restraint of her emotions. He, the artist, the musician, under the impact of his passion, felt compelled to break off the composition of *Siegfried* in the middle of the third act. He had to embark on something new, something which matched and expressed his present mood and inner stress: he started *Tristan and Isolde*. On 18 September 1857, he finished the text. In a letter to Mathilde from Venice a year later he recollected: '. . . today I finished the poem of Tristan and brought thee its last act, thou led'st me to the chair before the sofa, placedst thy arm around me and saidst: "Now I have nothing more to wish for!" On this day, at this hour, was I born anew. Till then was my before-life: from then began my after-life: in that wondrous instant alone did I live. Thou know'st how I spent it! In no tumult of intoxication; but solemnly, profoundly penetrated by a soothing warmth, free as if looking on eternity . . . a hallowed standstill came over me. A gracious woman, shy and diffident, had taken heart to cast herself into a sea of griefs and sorrows, to shape for me that precious instant, to give me life; thus did I receive thy life, thenceforward from the world to part with thee, to suffer with thee, die with thee.—At once the spell of longing was dissolved . . . All bitterness had vanished from me; I might err, feel pained or tortured, but ever it stayed clear as day to me that thy love was my highest possession, and without it my existence must be a contradiction of itself. —Thanks to thee, thou gracious, loving angel!'

The situation developed with fatal, distressing inevitability: Wagner's wife Minna, whose jealousy, not without justification, had been roused, opened a letter from her husband to Mathilde and interpreted it in her fashion. It *was* a love letter, though there existed no love affair in the conventional sense. Scenes, strain, explanations, misery followed. There was no solution, only one way open: separation. On 17 August 1858, Wagner left the *Asyl* after sixteen most fruitful months, the *Asyl* where he had wished to die: 'The last night in the *Asyl* I went to bed at 11 o'clock: I was to start at 5 o'clock next morning. Before I closed my eyes, it flashed through my soul how I had always sent myself to sleep here by the thought that on this very spot I once should die: thus should I lie when thou approachedst me for the last, last time, clasp'dst my head in thine arms, in open view of all, and with one final kiss receiv'dst my spirit! That death was my fondest conception, and it had framed itself entirely to the locality of my bed-room: the door towards the staircase was closed, thou enter'dst through the curtains of the study; thus didst thou wind thine arm around me; thus, gazing up to thee, I passed away . . . The sun crept up behind the mountain. Then I gazed across once more and long. O Heaven, not a tear came to me, but it seemed as if every hair on my temples was turning grey!' He sought refuge in Venice, where, during the winter of 1858–9, he finished the *Tristan*. Wagner gained fame and success many years later, when Ludwig II of Bavaria became his patron, Cosima his wife and mentor, and Bayreuth his headquarters. But the period of his highest inspiration, his creative fulfilment, was reached during those years in Switzerland, culminating in the short spell at the *Asyl*, when he conceived and wrote *Tristan*.

The house round which all these events centred escaped attention. Musicians, understandably, are, as a rule, not much interested in architecture. Wesendonck had his villa built and arranged in the best artistic tradition of the nineteenth century. Following Goethe, he looked to Italy for the prototype of his future home. He commissioned the Swiss architect, Zeugheer, to go to Rome and copy the seventeenth-century Villa Albani for him, which, with some unavoidable alterations, was carried out. In this Roman Villa—a fact which probably decided Wesendonck's choice—Cardinal Albani with the help of Winckelmann had gathered a famous collection of antique statues and bas-reliefs. Wesendonck, too, might have dreamt that he would end his days in this really splendid mansion; however, he, too, left Switzerland. After an anti-German demonstration in 1871 (during the Franco-Prussian war), he decided for political

reasons to return to Germany. For the next seventy years house and park were in the hands of the Zürich family Rieter-Rotberg, till, in 1945, the community of Zürich bought the whole area and two years later began to convert the Villa into a museum. What the interior of the house looked like while the Wesendoncks lived there, we do not know; only the famous staircase is preserved in its original state, where in the spring of 1858 a concert under Wagner's direction took place: 'In the month of March Frau Wesendonck informed me that she thought of having a kind of musical entertainment in her house to celebrate her husband's birthday... The pride of the Villa Wesendonck was a spacious hall which had been very elegantly decorated by Parisian stucco-workers, and I had once remarked that music would not sound at all badly there . . . The musical At Home was most successful. A full orchestra for the Beethoven pieces played with the greatest *éclat* under my conductorship, to the assembly of guests scattered about in the surrounding rooms. Such an unprecedented home concert seemed to throw everyone into a great state of excitement. The young daughter of the house presented me at the beginning of the performance with an ivory baton, carved from a design by Semper, the first and only complimentary one I ever received.'

* * *

Remembering vaguely the Wagner-Wesendonck story, knowing nothing at all about the house, it is a great surprise, coming up from the garden, to be confronted suddenly with an unmistakably Italian building: classic columns, flat roofs, spacious proportions, and white marble statues. But a still bigger surprise is in store: entering the house, the visitor is immediately surrounded by non-classical objects. With a few minor exceptions, the treasures this Villa now harbours are all non-European: Middle and Far-Eastern sculptures and paintings, African and Melanesian carvings predominate. The contrast is striking, but fused into a most successful unity. For a second time a German is connected with this spot built nearly a hundred years ago by a German on Swiss soil. Dr. Eduard v. d. Heydt, a member of a well-known West German banking family, has lived in Switzerland for several decades; as a collector of non-European art he is a figure of international repute. Large size Indian and Chinese sculptures always held special attraction for him and he was able to bring together a collection outstanding for quality as well as size. Combining necessity and generosity, he left a number of his most beautiful possessions on loan to museums in Europe and America: some were kept for him at the Völkerkunde Museum in Berlin, others at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, seven at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

The director of the Kunstgewerbe Museum in Zürich, Johannes Itten, set out to re-unite these scattered masterpieces, thus planning a peaceful annexation of Eastern treasures for his native country. A loan exhibition of 'Asiatic Art' 1934, and another of 'African Art' 1945, paved the way. After years of persuasion, persistence and labour—there was one amusing incident: a teacup, saucer and spoon used by Lenin during his exile in Switzerland were offered and accepted by the Russian authorities in exchange for works in their charge belonging to Dr. v. d. Heydt!—Direktor Itten this year at last reached his goal, modestly disguised as: The Rietberg Museum.

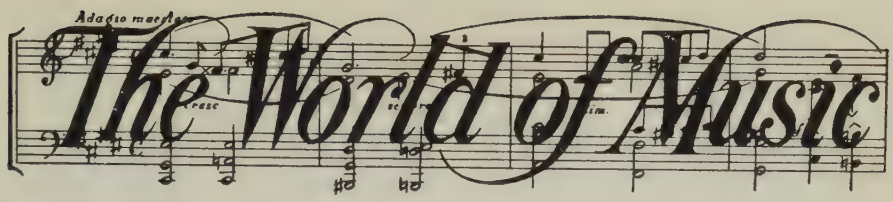
What makes it such a joy to walk through its rooms is the exquisite quality of every single exhibit. The first two rooms are filled mainly with pre-conquest American ceramics; then one moves straight on into two large rooms filled entirely with Indian sculptures, the first one of Southern Indian bronzes, the second one of North Indian stone works. Like European sculpture of the Middle Ages, these are nearly all religious works, figures of gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon. The dancing Shiva provides a typical example, with his four arms in traditional postures, crushing a little demon under his foot, surrounded by a circular aureol with many flames. There are other figures of the same god in this room, sitting next to his wife Parvati, their little son Shanka standing between them. In the next room goddesses prevail: Yakshi under the Tree, a

stone fragment from the temple at Konarka in Orissa; she is a tree or river goddess, symbol of fertility: two others, a pair of full figures, were once very likely flanking a doorway to a temple. Their sensuous beauty reminds one of the Exhibition of *The Art of India and Pakhistan* at Burlington House five years ago, when pieces of comparable quality were specially sent over from India. The transition to the Far East is accomplished step by step through works from Siam, Java and Bali. Buddha images provide the connecting link from India to China. The collection is particularly rich in Buddha statues of all kinds: standing, sitting, full figures, bas-reliefs; there are so many that regional and iconographical variations can be studied in detail. The head of a 'Buddha in Princely Attire', crowned like a king with a faint smile round his full lips, comes from Siam and is a work of a later period (sixteenth–seventeenth century). On Votive Steles from China—there are several interesting ones—Buddha is usually accompanied by two or more figures. Besides Buddha images, China provides large-scale animals: a life-size crouching tiger in yellowish limestone was once part of a tomb (Sung period). The succession of large sculpture is interrupted in Room Seven with a collection belonging to J. F. H. Menten, of Chinese funeral sculpture, all of smaller sizes. In their elegance and charm these ceramic figures invite comparison with late-antique figures from Tanagra. They enchant by their simplicity and intimacy, especially a music band of six standing girls, each playing a different instrument. On the next floor Chinese and Japanese painted scrolls, together with Chinese furniture, continue the Far Eastern theme. But then a definite break occurs; several rooms full of African, so-called 'primitive', carvings confront the visitor. Works of another order, formed by men of another physique with other traditions from other parts of the earth, mainly by negroes from Africa, some by the inhabitants of Polynesia and Indonesia: masks, shields, totem poles, fetishes, ancestral figures, chieftain seats carved in wood or ivory to express fear and obsession, to serve at ancestral worship and to support magical rites or just for everyday use. A world full of strange meaning, very far—so it seems—from our own, but which lately has been brought within our comprehension, made accessible by anthropological research and psychological insight. When Dr. v. d. Heydt started collecting these aboriginal works some thirty years ago, he was—certainly in Germany—well ahead of the general trend, a true pioneer in the field.

There is still a last big surprise in store: walking up one more flight of stairs to what was once the loft, one finds oneself in a low, wide room full of masks, bewilderingly wild and alive, a straight follow-on from the African masks further down. These masks under the roof are *Swiss*, a most fitting finish to the whole museum and a severe shock to the visitor from abroad. Who would have thought that the Swiss, the most civilised and domesticated people in Central Europe, could have produced such a host of frightening ghosts, of terrifying witches, of brutal fiends? Produced them, not in the far distant past, but right up until the present time. Most of these masks are less than a hundred years old; of several it is known *who* carved them, and in *which* remote valley. It is an object lesson: how thin the crust of civilisation is, above which we live; how powerful the shadow side of man is, and what astonishing creative abilities lurk uncrushed beneath a top layer of rationalised behaviour!

Zürich is fortunate: by having provided a home, it has secured for itself this precious collection; Zürich which has been for some time already—through Dr. Jung and his circle of friends and pupils—a European centre for the understanding of Eastern symbols and the appreciation of archetypal values. By such a permanent collection in their midst, this insight, no doubt, will now be further stimulated.

What strange transformations some places have to endure! Where once Nordic heroes and Germanic gods were revived through the magic of music, very different deities now reign in silent majesty.



Verdi at Covent Garden

In the last few years increasing attention has been paid to the so-called 'middle period' operas of Verdi—those that lie between the popular triumvirate of *Rigoletto*, *Trovatore* and *Traviata*, and the three later masterpieces, *Aïda*, *Otello* and *Falstaff*. Sadler's Wells has revived *Simone Boccanegra* and *Don Carlos*, the Glyndebourne Company has put on *La Forza del Destino* and the revised version of *Macbeth*, and now Covent Garden presents *Un Ballo in Maschera*, for the first time since 1937. All these operas are interesting, rather than fully successful; they all contain magnificent music alternating with dull passages, and they show the 'effective' rum-ti-tum style of most of Verdi's early operas gradually being transformed into the mastery of dramatic effect which he later achieved. In *The Masked Ball* the scene in the fortune-teller's hut and the midnight scene at the foot of the gallows contain some of Verdi's most imaginative and sensitive orchestral writing, interspersed with passages of *opera buffa* pure and simple, and it takes very careful handling of the production to combine the two discordant elements. The Covent Garden performance is not ideal in this respect; the action is inclined to drag, and there is not enough brightness and polish in the ensembles on the whole, so that the essentially patchy nature of the work is revealed too clearly. No doubt this dualism was partly Verdi's fault and partly that of his librettists—for the opera combines scenes of frivolous court-life in eighteenth-century Sweden with an illicit romance as well as a conspiratorial plot against the King's life. (Incidentally it is absurd to recall that the censorship of the time compelled Verdi to change the scene to the puritan Boston of a century earlier, and we are grateful to Professor Dent for letting us see the action in its true perspective.) The singing of the principals is good on the whole, especially that of the last-minute arrival, the Brazilian soprano, Constantina Araujo, and the whole opera makes an effective entertainment, in spite of the drawbacks mentioned above. From the scenic point of view the masked ball itself comes off best, with its imaginative décor and beautiful costumes—and for once the King's death aria is prevented from appearing absurd. In this scene, too, Verdi's use of the ball music as a continuous background to the dramatic happenings in the front of the stage shows his mastery to the full. Covent Garden certainly deserve congratulation on a revival which is fully worth while.

New Recordings

The harvest of records continues to be brought in, considerably swollen by the so-long-awaited release from the E.M.I. group. Whatever may be the pick of the crop, and that will have been determined by reviewers elsewhere, two recordings, by reason largely of their enterprise, claim some special attention. These are the twin discs of Balinese music issued by Argo, a new English company, and the complete set of Debussy's *Pelléas et Melisande* from Decca. There is, in fact, some slight connection between the two, for Debussy undoubtedly heard, and was impressed by, the *gamelang* at the Exposition Universelle of 1889, though it is hardly the case, as the notes to the Balinese music assert, that 'it is a commonplace of musical history that Claude Debussy was considerably influenced by (it).' He was able to hear during that summer, as Edward Lockspeiser put it, the whole musical universe pass through Paris. Moreover, an earlier visit to Russia and the celebrated Mme von Meck had opened his ears to oriental influences; on that occasion it was the simple folk-melody that appealed to him

rather than the work of the nationalists, with the sole exception of Moussorgsky.

Balinese Music

The music played on the Argo records by the orchestra from Indonesia is at a far remove from primitive music, which may be, though rather arbitrarily, distinguished by absence of notation. It is capable of so organised a form as that of variations over an ostinato figure, and within the limits of music for dancing, of programme music employing motives in a manner not quite unlike that of the nineteenth-century Western innovators. A choral composition illustrating a particular incident from the Ramayana (the Indian epics obviously provide a convenient mythology for these composers), called a Monkey Dance, contains some brilliantly mimetic vocal writing that resembles nothing in our music at all. The orchestral pieces are largely percussive, and it is here that the recording leaves something to be desired; it does not seem to be sensitive to frequencies higher than about ten thousand c.p.s., and the spirited playing of the Balinese seems hardly to receive justice. There are, as if by way of compensation, very few surface noises on the discs. These should not escape the notice of music lovers; there is nothing in them that makes difficult listening to modern ears accustomed, for instance, to the effects of Stravinsky.

Pelléas et Melisande

The *Pelléas* issued under the direction of Ernest Ansermet must be among the finest recordings extant. There are occasional minor blemishes in the orchestral playing by the Suisse Romande orchestra, especially in the woodwind, and the *Pelléas* of Pierre Mollet is either too excited or too near to the microphone for his higher notes, and a little loose in diction, but these are the only faults to the recording, which is perfect in tone and most movingly unfolds the music drama. Suzanne Danco sings Melisande with an ethereal sensitivity which must rival that of the original heroine, who so satisfies the composer Mary Garden. This performance is a *tour de force*.

The production of this opera is never easy. It is burdened by an action which remains static even after Debussy's having cut five heavily symbolic scenes from the original play. It is clearly Debussy's triumph, not Maeterlinck's. That this was intended by the composer may be shown by his own words to Guiraud some time before the idea of setting the play occurred to him, some time indeed before the play was written. He would want a poet, he said, who would allow him, here and there, to show more art than he. Debussy, in ridding himself of most of the diffuseness of the text, humanised the main characters; he increased the dramatic tension of the piece. This tension Ansermet has magically conveyed; his tempi are fine; there are no exaggerations of the symbolic motives, as there so often are, and the scenes of the music-drama which are sometimes cut are left in with a feeling of integration into the rest. In fact, everything that led to Debussy's quarrel and rupture with Maeterlinck, including the replacement of Maeterlinck's wife by Mary Garden at the first performance, seems to have been more than justified. Even those who prefer the later, and less Tristan-like, *Le Martyre de Saint-Sebastien*, and who object to the vapidity of the *Pelléas* score, will surely relish this beautiful recording. *Le Martyre* itself, by the way, is now available for the first time on an American L.P. issued by the Allegro company. The recording is adequate; the music, which abandons the style of *Pelléas* in favour of an idiom matures one of the earlier choral works and the later orchestral *Images*, is a masterpiece of vivid, purposeful dramatic writing. Does the contrast disparage *Pelléas*? It only pleads, surely, for a closer appreciation of Debussy's last works. It was some time into the second half of the late century, after all, before the late Beethoven quartets were heard for what they were.

A Short Story

The Christmas Box

UYS KRIGE

NEVER on a Christmas morning had I looked with such distaste upon the world as I did that morning of the 25 December 1944. Standing in the doorway of the large tent that served as an Officers' Mess for the Convalescent Depot—one of ten tent hospitals in the Cancello area—I was gazing out in the direction of Naples, a flat grey smudge under the rain, ten miles away to the South-west. It had been raining for more than a week, a dreary drizzle with no downpour or sudden squall to relieve its monotony; but I was certain the rain wasn't the chief cause of the malaise that had settled on my mind and spirit during the past few days.

The long blank day stretched out before me. The rain would nibble away at it patiently like a mouse, and I would continue to nibble away at it as painfully with my thoughts. I had an invitation for lunch from Colonel Walker, O.C. of the Specialist Hospital at Naples; but it was the vague kind of invitation one need not take up unless one wanted to. I wasn't going. I liked Colonel Walker. I had a great admiration for him both as a man and a surgeon —as a plastic surgeon he was well on the way to becoming world famous—but at the moment the thought of getting into my jeep in an hour's time and driving over to the Hospital filled me with an unutterable weariness.

The Specialist Hospital was a maxillo-facial centre and plastic surgery. It handled long-term casualties, particularly those who had received serious facial injuries and burns; and to it came the worst bone cases from all the Italian fronts, even from Yugoslavia. As the Chief Dental Surgeon of the Depot at Cancello, I had, for the last six months, been getting all Colonel Walker's convalescents. Every Sunday I would drive over to the Hospital to collect a new batch of them; they would stay with us—moving about awkwardly with their faces in splints—for about two months; and then I would take them back for a final check-up. Our task at the Depot was to clean their teeth and wash their splints; to watch their diet and keep them off drink, for if they ate the wrong kind of fruit or got drunk, they might easily vomit and choke; and then I, or one of my colleagues, would quickly have to cut the wires connecting the splints so that they could be sick without choking. So the Specialist Hospital had during the past six months grappled me to it, if not with hooks of steel, then at least with hundreds of steel splints that immobilised the mangled jaws of my patients. But somehow, at this moment, I could work up no interest in it; it was the last thing I wanted to think about.

The drizzle had stopped and I decided to climb the hill behind the Mess. At its summit I halted on the gravel road. Miles away the huge bulk of Vesuvius was blotted out by a gigantic greyish-black cloud that obliterated even the villages and hamlets against its lowest slopes. To the right, the Bay of Baia was a dirty slate grey flecked with minute white spots, but above Naples the clouds had lifted and some of the buildings stood out very white and clear in patches of sunlight. These patches were continually shifting and when I looked at Naples again, there was the Hospital standing up straight and slim in a perfect square of white light.

The drizzle had started again. No—I decided as I sloshed down that gravel road

to the Mess—I wasn't homesick for South Africa. I did not even long for my wife and children. Then what did I want as a gift from life today? It might be quite pleasant, I decided, to be a lizard in the sun, or an old crab motionless on a dry beach somewhere out of reach of the tide.

And what about your own gift to life today? I next asked myself. Go and see the chaps, slap 'em on the back, say all the trite old things and wish them a Happy Xmas when what you'd really like to wish them is to go to hell?

I had just entered the Mess when the phone rang. As I picked up the receiver, I could not fail to recognise immediately that slow, deep voice. It was Colonel Walker, reminding me of his invitation of the week before. We had been a little vague; he just wanted to make sure. I wasn't feeling too bright this morning, I said.

'Then come along and we'll cheer you up!'

'I really can't come, Sir, I have some work to do . . .'

'Come off it, Gordon. I know you have three days' leave and the Depot has hardly any patients at the moment.'

Speaking into the telephone, I had a very clear picture of the Colonel—tall and clean-shaven with just a touch of formality in his blunt soldierly manner. Yes, he would handle even the telephone with the same precision as a surgical instrument.

I tried a few more evasions, but I wasn't getting anywhere. I was determined, though, not to give way to him. Because he worked himself to the bone, because he woke up his staff at all hours of the night so that he could operate at once on the patients the planes had brought in from the battle fronts, did that place me under any obligation to him?

A note of irritation must have crept into my voice, for: 'What's biting you, old man?' he asked good-humouredly. 'Must be the weather . . . You hop into your jeep and come right over! Our Welfare Officer has done us proud. You should see the food he's brought in. He even wangled some tinned turkey from the Yanks. A whole truckful of special Red Cross parcels turned up yesterday morning. And every patient has had at least one parcel from home. Ward C had a Christmas tree last night . . . a very jolly affair . . . you should have been there . . .'

The Colonel no sooner mentioned Ward C than it became as real and vivid to me—here in this drab little mess—as when I had first set foot in it months ago; and I seemed now to be standing in the middle of that spacious, airy room. The ward contained the hospital's worst cases and the Colonel had taken me there to see the Indian, Ranjat, wounded by a mortar on the Bologna front two months earlier. 'He's been vomiting a lot,' Walker had said, 'and I can't find out why. His stomach is all right. I want you to have a look at his teeth.'

The ward had large windows opening out on a view of the bay and Vesuvius in the distance; and the first thing that had struck me on entering it was its sunniness. It seemed filled with light, that peculiar static summer light of the Mediterranean. Then I took a look at the patients and forgot all about the sunlight. Many had limbs amputated; three of them had both legs off. One, the worst, with his legs off just below the trunk, lay under a window-sill on which stood an earthen pot containing a single cyclamen.

We had stopped beside a stocky young man on whose face it was difficult for me to focus my eyes. 'One of our most successful surgical jobs,' the Colonel had said. 'You should have seen him when they brought him here from Yugoslavia. We've grafted three-quarters of a new face on to him.' I had heard about this case and I knew it was one of Walker's triumphs. The man chattered unintelligibly to us in his own language, smiling hideously all the time. It was a few minutes before I realised what exactly his face reminded me of: one of my small son's jigsaw puzzles that had come out wrong.

A young Englishman had strolled about the ward—a good-looking, fair-haired lad of about twenty, six feet tall with a healthy complexion and a jaunty air. His left arm, clamped in position by a special splint tied round his body, stuck straight up above his head—in striking contrast with

his general liveliness. The arm splint was extended by a steel rod at the apex of which were small movable celluloid caps attached by elastic bands to the rigid finger-tips for the purpose of exercising the hand. The young man had no right arm: it had been amputated at the shoulder.

The Indian officer whom we had come to see lay behind a screen at the far end of the ward. 'A mortar struck him full in the face,' the Colonel had told me. 'He'll probably die. We've got to make him believe he'll live, then he has a chance . . . We've kept him alive for two months. If we can keep him alive for another two, we might be able to start grafting on him.'

Then we had walked behind the screen and the Colonel had lifted a small muslin cloth covering the Indian's face. Where there should have been a face, there was only a big black hole. No eyes, no nose, no mouth, no lips. The forehead, however, had remained untouched and the firm jaw still held all its lower teeth. 'Must be something else,' I had told the Colonel a few minutes later, 'his teeth are fine.'

'Yes, Ward C was pretty gay last night,' the Colonel was saying at the other end of the wire. 'We even had a small concert party to entertain them.'

I had never known the Colonel so talkative. ' . . . And some of them asked after you,' he wound up a short description of last night's party.

Yes, I certainly had got to know those men in Ward C. Anderson, the man with his legs off at the trunk, I had seen make an amazing recovery. Only last week they had brought him his crutches and we had all watched his first faltering Odyssey across the open space in the middle of the ward.

And I had struck up quite a friendship with Beaumont, the young Englishman. A typical pampered only son of a rich, upper-class family, I had thought after our first conversation; but I soon found that I was wrong. The war might have taken much from him, but it had also given him much—a certain maturity of thought and perception well in advance of his years. And with the Serb, who had learnt English remarkably quickly, I could now even discuss my passion for painting.

Since my inspection of his teeth, I had seen Ranjat only four or five times. Often, when I entered the ward, he was being attended to and I did not care to interrupt. Speech, of course, was impossible to him. When you spoke to him, he answered with brief, firm gestures of the hand. His hands, the most vital things about him, seemed completely divorced from that dreadful gap and were extraordinarily expressive. Once I had watched him having a meal. Beside his bed sat Sister Bradford, a plain, red-faced, middle-aged woman who, although she never stopped working, always had a kind word and a gay smile for everyone and was the ward's favourite. There was a tube in Ranjat's mouth attached to a small apparatus like a stomach pump in the Sister's right hand. Slowly she pumped milk into that inert body; and when she was finished, Ranjat waved with his right hand to thank her. The next time I had seen him, the Serb—with a peculiar trance-like expression on his patchwork face—was reading aloud to him. I stopped to listen to that deliberate, guttural voice. The book was *Alice in Wonderland.*

' . . . And we had a pleasant surprise from the nuns of the Loreto Convent . . .' the Colonel was saying on the phone. 'Remind me to tell you about it when you come . . .'

I was still hedging when he cut me short with:

'Now don't talk nonsense, my boy, just you come along. That's an order!'

Half an hour later I got into my jeep and drove off down the gravel road towards Naples. The outskirts were all right, but the city itself remained an eyesore. Very little of the bomb damage had as yet been repaired. Street after street of smashed hollow houses, a dirty stained yellow. Naples here seemed an endless row of dead, hollow teeth. *See Naples and die* . . . True, too true . . . I was sick, sick to death of Naples . . .

As soon as I entered the neat, spotless hospital, I felt better. And I felt a lot better once the Colonel and I had sat down to a cup of tea in his small office on the second floor.

Beaumont's fingers weren't working yet, the Colonel told me. The delay was

puzzling . . . Anderson was thumping about all over the place on his crutches. 'But I'm worried about Ranjat. Though his lungs and stomach are all right, he seems to be getting worse . . .'

The nuns must have made an impression on the Colonel for he started telling me about them without my having to remind him.

'Three of them turned up here late yesterday afternoon. One spoke perfect English. They heard about our *grandi mutilati* and had brought them each a little gift. The nuns had stitched one handkerchief each, the little nun said, handing me the paper parcel she was carrying . . .'

As the Colonel paused, I heard a loud noise of shouting and stamping from the direction of Ward C along the passage.

'They're nice handkerchiefs,' the Colonel continued, 'looks as if those nuns used material they were saving for their vestments. You'll see them presently . . .'

I had no inclination to see Ward C, but I made no comment. 'There weren't enough handkerchiefs to go round, so that little nun had stitched three herself. Jolly decent of her to find out just how many men we had in Ward C . . .'

The Colonel again stopped speaking, for the noise in the background had become an uproar. Gay cries and shouts could be heard, and voices roaring in chorus the words of *Roll Out the Barrel* which the radiogram was blaring.

More voices joined in the singing as we walked down the passage. The Colonel opened the door and we entered. The sun had come out; some of the windows stood wide open and the ward, decorated with paper streamers, looked bright and gay in the soft morning light that filled it from end to end. In the far corner, near Ranjat's screen, stood a small Christmas tree, festooned with coloured bells, silver stars, spangles and other decorations that sparkled in the beam of sunlight that fell across the tree and lay in a long white strip over the floor.

I looked around. Beside his bed each patient had arranged his Christmas gifts: a tie, a shirt, socks, a tin of sweets, shaving tackle, books, etc.; and almost every small heap contained a hemstitched handkerchief.

The first man I noticed was Anderson. He was sitting on the edge of his bed, thumping his crutches on the floor in time to the music and singing *Roll Out the Barrel* at the top of his voice. Behind his head, in the jar on the window-sill, was the cyclamen, rosily transparent in this clear light; and behind the cyclamen Vesuvius, cloudless now, towered up into a deep blue sky.

The record had come to an end but someone had at once started the vigorous tune up again. A few feet from us the Serb was dancing what was probably one of his national dances in perfect time. Not knowing the words, he was humming the tune, but humming it as loudly as Anderson sang it. And he was grinning from ear to ear, his face contorted in a grotesque comic mask.

Everybody was making a noise—either by singing or shouting or banging something, mostly a boot, on the floor; one tall chap with a scar across his right cheek clinking a toothbrush against a glass.

Only then I noticed the cause of all this gaiety. At the other end of the ward Beaumont, in his pyjamas and gown, was waltzing in and out between the beds, bending down beside each bed to show its occupant his hand still firmly held by its splint. And with his face flushed with joy and excitement, he was shouting:

'Hooray! They're working! They're working! Just look at my fingers, pal! They're bending, moving, see!'

And sure enough the fingers were moving, feebly perhaps, but certainly moving, slowly stretching the elastic bands taut and then relaxing them.

As we walked down the ward, he turned and came towards us, still dancing in his clumsy way. 'Now I can shave myself!' he half shouted. 'Wash my own face! Fix my own tie! Won't Sister be pleased?'

We were almost up to him before he noticed us, the three of us meeting beside the screen. 'Thank you, Sir! Thank you!' Beaumont exclaimed to the Colonel. 'You were right! You're always right!' And he turned to me with:

'Soon I'll be playing the piano again,

Doc! What price *Chopsticks*? Or the *Emperor Concerto*? Just look at 'em!'

And, pointing with his chin to his uplifted fingers, he almost succeeded in clenching his hand. There was a twang and one of the elastic bands had snapped.

In this joyous gesture Beaumont had swung sideways. Suddenly he was still. I saw he was looking over the screen. I followed his gaze.

Propped against four large pillows, the Indian was sitting up in bed. The hair that usually fell in thick curls over the forehead had been brushed back and the brow now looked very broad above the muslin cloth. He wore a brand new pair of pyjamas of deep blue with a green silken dragon on each pocket. Beside him sat Sister Bradford, feeding him from the little black pump. She was talking softly to him, so softly her lips seemed merely to frame the words; and her face shone with such happiness that, for the first time, I thought her beautiful.

I looked at Beaumont again. He was still staring with an expression that was a mixture of awe, compassion and shame at Ranjat. Then I discovered what he was staring at—not Ranjat's face, but his hands.

Calmly, peacefully, Ranjat's strong left hand rested on a flame-coloured finely stitched handkerchief while his right hand beat with his bare knuckles on the bedside table a triumphant tattoo in time to the music.

And suddenly my spirit soared and I knew a joy that I had not experienced in years.

The Feet

They that spread their feet on the flat earth
And distribute their weight over its sides
Prevent the little flowers from coming to birth
That are the sultan sun's brides.

This is the penalty of those huge feet
Whereon we stand to do our diurnal trades;
Innocent worms are stifled as they eat
And bent and bruised the green grass blades.

Therefore the virtuous file off their toes
To save the lives of small earth-creeping things.
But O! preserve the vastness of thy nose,
Whereon the great birds perch to preen their wings.

R. P. LISTER

The Second Coming

R. H. BOWDEN

EARLY morning: away to the south the sky lies like a slab of cold, grey stone above the desert. At the foot of the hills the village with its flat-roofed houses is still silent. Its one main street is empty except for the figures of three old men leading three gaunt camels behind them. Gradually the sky lightens: the three old men shiver in the morning air and clutch their grey, woollen cloaks more closely about their throats. The camels bow lean necks and tread mincingly on galled feet. Dimly the three old men remember how they have followed the star: how the sky above them has remained black and featureless except for that one solitary star which moved always before them at night. Vaguely they feel a little resentful towards that star: before it came to tantalise them on their journey, they remember obscurely that the sky seemed somehow more friendly —peopled with its many smaller stars all stationary above the various parts of the earth.

For this time the star has brought them only misfortune—lost comforts, lost wealth, lost servants, with even their camel-drivers finally deserting them as they crossed the desert: until, on this last night, their camels have refused to carry them further, turning snarling, stupefied heads when the three old men sought to mount them. Now even the star itself has begun to fail, its light fading and glimmering intermittently as they crossed on foot the last cold stretches of the desert.

The old men go on up the village street, but they wonder this time if they did right to come: perhaps in the evening the star will not return and now—they have nothing left except a few handfuls of dates and three broken-down camels. The first man alone has a steady step, the other two stumble repeatedly as they go. And behind

them the camels whine, giving out a peculiar, sickly stench.

At last they turn into a by-lane, pausing before a high wooden fence. The bowed shadows of the old men are cast on the grey, sun-bleached wood behind them. The camels stand now tranquilly munching the few dry leaves that appear above the top of the fence. In a few minutes a tall gate opens into the knacker's yard. The group goes inside: the first old man hammers on a door and the camel-dealer appears—a squat, thick-set man with black, bristling hair and a hare-lip. He is only partly dressed, and his huge bare feet splay and then contract, with a peculiarly sensual deliberation, in the dry dust of the yard. He smacks his hare-lip and stands, with hands on hips, looking at the group before him with an appearance of amused disgust.

The first old man moves towards him: 'We want to get rid of these animals. They're useless and worn out: but they're all that we've got, and we need money for the end of our journey. What will you offer us for them?'

The camel-dealer does not move, does not even bother to look more closely at the animals.

'And where d'you come from?' he asks casually. 'Why d'you come to this country with nothing but three broken-down camels?'

Now the second old man moves forward, spreading out his hands half apologetically: 'We come,' he says, 'from across the continent.' He fumbles with his hands. 'We started off with . . . all our possessions. We were wealthy but have lost everything.' He gives a short nervous laugh. 'We were told to search . . . for the Son of God . . . For the second time, that is . . .'

The camel-dealer bellows with laughter: 'The Son of God! Again?'

The third old man looks at him tolerantly, good-humouredly. 'We found it hard to believe, ourselves,' he says. 'But in the end we came to accept the idea, again.'

The camel-dealer interrupts: 'But a second time! Coming to *our* country! And after that first . . . What a God!' Then dropping his voice suddenly: 'But *do* you believe it? Seriously.'

'We do,' says the first old man with dignity.

'Of course,' says the second. 'Apparently so, or we should not have come so far.'

The third one hesitates and turns his face away: 'Yes, we all believe, at least in some sort of God, though, to be honest, I myself have begun to believe that God has grown indifferent to our troubles. Just for that reason, I find it difficult to understand why the Son of God should come again . . . But then, perhaps . . . such indifference may at last necessitate further miracles.'

'So!' bellows the camel-dealer, slapping his great round thighs and laughing again. 'Your God's become indifferent. Then who's to care?—So let's get down to business. Where are your wretched animals?'

In the meantime the camels have wandered over to the far side of the yard and are squatting down there nibbling contentedly at the prickly pears on a clump of cactus.

The camel-dealer goes towards them followed by the third old man. 'Worth nothing,' says the camel-dealer shortly.

'Nothing?' asks the old man. 'Why not? They're flesh and blood!' Suddenly his nostrils are assailed by a stench of drying blood from behind a big stained door. 'After all they're worth something for that . . . ' and he purses his lips with a look of disgust.

'For the three,' says the camel-dealer, 'here's thirty pieces,' and he counts the coins out into the old man's shaking hand.

'Of silver?' asks the old man, blinking.

'Silver!' again the camel-dealer shouts with laughter. 'Of nickel! We no longer use silver in this country.'

The old man looks at the coins, then clumsily puts them away. He shrugs his shoulders and turns his watery eyes to take a last glance at the camels. The three animals are still munching contentedly, curling their long upper lips almost superciliously round the prickly pears. From time to time they droop their long eyelashes over their sombre eyes with a look of feminine tenderness.

'What luxury they're enjoying!' the old man says as he turns to rejoin his companions.

'Luxury?' the camel-dealer shouts, as he takes down a heavy, leathern apron that hangs from a hook on the wall. 'And they've come in search of a God! For the second time . . .' And he begins to laugh again and rub his hands as the three old men stumble out of the yard and away up the village street.

Beyond the edge of the village they sit down beneath an olive tree. Each one pulls out a handful of dry dates and silently begins to eat.

At length the third one speaks: 'Thirty nickel pieces—that's all we've got left between us.'

And the first one: 'And do you remember how we arrived the first time?'

Then the second: 'But shall we get there at all this time? Supposing the star doesn't reappear. After all, it was beginning to fade this morning.'

'In that case,' puts in the first reassuringly, 'I think I could remember the road. This village looks very familiar, and those hills look exactly as before.'

But the second one is not to be reassured. 'Why should the star,' he asks, 'take us to the same place twice? After all, has everything been repeated? Did we sell the camels last time? Did we lose all that we had on the journey?'

Then the third old man slowly puts away the remnants of his food. 'Does it matter so much,' he asks, 'if we never reach the end of our journey? It's not *our* second coming that matters. If God has forgotten us, it's not our business. We can only wait quietly till He chooses to remember us.' And he lies down, folds his garments about him and falls asleep.

. . . So the three old men lie sleeping beneath an olive tree; their long, narrow feet are pointed at the sky; their beards stir gently in the wind; the sharp, dry leaves eddy beneath their lifted arms and form into little drifts beneath their knees and hipbones . . .

But that evening the star returned: so that for three nights they were able to follow it northwards and eastwards, though each night it grew fainter and fainter. Even so, they could never be sure whether it was the star itself that was fading or whether it was their own eyes that were growing weaker. As they went on, they spoke less and less to each other, and when they climbed a steep hill they often stumbled and fell. Almost without knowing what they did, they continued upon their journey, each one becoming more and more absorbed in himself. It was as though each one were travelling deeper and deeper into his own inner darkness.

The first one grew more and more obsessed by his own memories. Every hillside, every rock, every stream reminded him of an earlier journey. He was going back into the gloom, amongst green, silk trees and past azure waters, towards the rich mountains of his youth.

The second one became completely absorbed in his own physical discomforts and failings. He was asthmatic and short of breath; he had a patch of dry eczema on his ankle which had cracked and begun to bleed: and at times, when he climbed a steep hill too rapidly, he became incontinent much to his discomfort. He felt that gradually he was loosing control over his body: his whole body was in rebellion against his will.

And the third one grew more and more engrossed in his own increasingly confused ideas. What was faith? What was doubt? Wasn't doubt the most difficult kind of believing? Wasn't belief in an indifferent god the most difficult type of god to believe in?—A belief somewhere on the borders of doubt. But wasn't indifference, impassivity, only a form of universal love, of universal acceptance and understanding? For isn't there at last a point where every emotion, if increased in intensity, changes into its opposite? So it is that indifference can be changed ultimately into universal love. Now, as he went on his way, he became obsessed with this one idea.

So they travel on: until, early on the fourth evening, the star finally disappears.

Then the three old men sit down by the roadside: they dare not speak to one another. They are in a lane walled in by vines and evening trees, and there is no star to be seen. Feebly the second one

moves his hand before his eyes to make sure that he can discern at least his own movements. At length the third one speaks: 'So we shall never discover what it was that we came to see . . .'

But the first one looks about and then rises to his feet. 'Come, let's go on,' he says. 'I shall remember the way without the star.'

The other two shrug their shoulders: they do not believe in him, but they follow him wearily up the lane because there is nothing else to do. At last they reach the outskirts of a small town: they stand beneath a narrow stone archway, staring into a maze of ill-lit streets. The dim, shouting figures of children move before them, playing in the orange lamplight that falls from the windows of the houses.

'Now which way?' asks the third one.

The first one looks at the alleyways leading away in all directions and shakes his head.

The second begins to moan: he feels the cold stones of the wall slowly numbing his legs.

Then out of the crowd of screaming children a boy runs towards them. He stops immediately in front of them, grinning through broken teeth. His red hair glints in the lamplight, and his head is twisted back on one shoulder as though he has been deformed from birth. He stands before them waiting, as though he has expected to meet them here.

'I could take you,' he says, 'to the place, if none of you can remember the way.'

The three of them stare at him in bewilderment, as though his face were familiar.

The boy laughs and shakes his head: 'No, I didn't take you there before, but I could take you this time—if you had anything left to offer me.'

'We have nothing,' says the second old man a little ashamed. 'Can't you see, we haven't even gifts to give to the child?'

'Nothing?' asks the boy, casually turning away.

'Only the thirty pieces we got for the camels,' says the third old man, moving hurriedly after him.

'Thirty nickels,' mutters the boy. 'That's not much, you know.'

'All that we got for the camels,' says the old man. 'That's all we can give you.'

The boy moves forward: 'Oh well,' he complains, 'I suppose it's all you can expect these days.'

So the old man hands over the money, and the boy begins to lead them through the maze of filthy dim-lit streets. At length he stops at the corner: 'There, the fourth door on the right.' He stands back smiling, and watching them, with his head twisted wryly to one side.

The three old men go on alone: almost, they believe, they have reached the end of their journey.

'What shall we find?' gasps the second one breathlessly, his voice quavering with excitement.

'Perhaps it will be the same as before,' says the first. 'Don't you remember the child curling up his hands to shield off the light, and the eyes of the cattle red with sleep?'

But the third and oldest one shrugs his shoulders and adds: 'It can't be the same as before, for this time we arrive empty-handed, and the thirty pieces have already been paid. Now nothing can be the same again: our old beliefs can never return to life, and perhaps we are too old to understand the new ones even if we should see them.'

They stumble through a half-open door: they are so old that they can scarcely see where they are going. They pass down a long passage filled with stench, and find themselves in a small, badly-lit room. From a dirty, dishevelled bed a woman rises shrieking: but there is no child beside her, and she runs from the room in terror clasping her hands in front of her face. Dazed and confused, the three old men turn round and return to the street.

And the boy waits for them there. 'Not in there!' he cries. 'It's the next one.'

In confusion they go in at the next doorway. And again there is nothing: nothing but broken bottles and an overturned chair and a slowly guttering tallow light.

Outside the boy leads them on, taunting them again: 'No! Not in there! In here! In here!'

So they go searching through the crumbling town, seeking, peering in at open

windows, entering vacant rooms, disturbing people at their pastimes, stumbling over children in dark passages: until, at last, a mob begins to gather behind, following them mocking and jeering: 'What is it you look for? What do you expect to find in our houses?'

And almost without knowing it, the three old men answer as they wander exhausted down the streets:

'The Son of God.'
'The Prince of Peace.'
'The Son of Man.'

At each answer the people's laughter and jeering increase as they repeat after them with ever increasing irony: 'God? Peace? Man?'

Then from time to time a man or sometimes a woman will run up behind taunting them; until at last it seems that the people are driving them rather than following them, forcing them out of the town.

But the old men seem now to be scarcely aware of where they are going: dimly they remember that they are searching for the fulfilment of some prophecy that started them on this journey. Then even this they do not remember clearly: they only know they are seeking something, something to fill the empty spaces at the end of their lives.

Now they are outside, stumbling down the hillside below the town, the people behind them laughing and jeering, wandering between olive trees over the bare soil.

Then gradually, as though out of the dimness of their memories they have remembered something, or as though their searching has reached its limits and become transformed, the three old men pause, limbs trembling, eyes watering, and peer at the sky. And slowly they become aware that there is neither darkness nor a single quivering star before them, but now many brilliant stars, each one of which remains stationary above the various places of the earth: the earth, cold, glistening, frost-rimed as far as the eye can see. Then awkwardly the three old men fall forward upon their withered knees, upon their shrunken chests, their hands spreading out and clutching weakly on either side of them at the loose surface of soil. And the people closing about them see how the lips of the three old men are touching softly, effortlessly, again and again at the dust and dirt of the earth.

Then, with a sudden movement of surprise and suspicion, the people begin to throw stones at them and to prod them and beat them with sticks. But the old men do not move: beneath the assurance of the many stars they accept the repeated blows of the people.

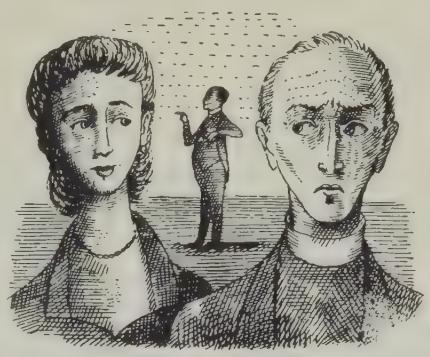
The Holly Tree

Obeying voices in his head
the prophet as a chosen sign
sets a holly tree between
the wedding and the gentle bride.
All doves desert the sacred tree
and shadows on the morning face
infest the leaves and interpose
their forms of dark catastrophe.
The neutral soil receives the root
and rain allows its benison
impartially to fall upon
the cradle and the winding sheet.
The branches turn towards the light
that seeks to fill the trees green heart
and children of the wedding came
to bear the scarlet berries home.

PHILIP OAKES

Jones Disposes

MICHAEL VORONETZ



ONCE upon a time, not so long ago, there were two almost synonymous Joneses in China. Both were young missionaries: both belonged to the same mission, and both were commonly referred to as Tommy Jones. One of them, J. Thomas Jones, lived in Tientsin; the other, Thomas J. Jones, in Hankow. The Tientsin Jones was short and frisky, a wit much in demand at parties, and a budding surgeon. The Jones of Hankow was tall, dark, thin-lipped and unsmiling. He was not out to heal the body. His job was the saving of souls and uplifting of morals. When not roaming the slums of Hankow in search of human material for conversion, he spent his time in studies of sacred writings and in meditations on Divine Intervention and Providential Guidance, the fruits of which he regarded as minor revelations. His learning was considerable, his speech terse and views uncompromising.

It would seem that the desire to marry, which assailed J. Thomas Jones of Tientsin, came on the backwash of a happy Christmas party with much fun under the mistletoe. Having succumbed to it at once, he cast out for a young lady in China, but found none. So he wrote to the headquarters of the mission at home for a likely maiden to be selected for him. Six months later, Thomas J. Jones of Hankow received a cable:

> 'Jones Chinamish Hankow. Meet marry Lucy Marvin Yokohama sailing Seattle second Mitsui Maru blessing.'

It puzzled him at first. The unsigned message was from headquarters, of course, but why this peremptory order to marry? He turned it over in his mind and saw the reason. At twenty-five, it was time for him to obey the solemn command to multiply and fill the earth. This, naturally, had come to the notice of his watchful elders, and now a mate was coming out to him. He was neither pleased nor annoyed. It was but the routine of a useful life to marry and live with a woman. Thought of marriage had not yet entered his head, but now it was crashing on him of itself, because it was good for him to marry, at a sharp prod of the Guiding Finger. He tingled with a joyous, grateful feeling. Pipe in mouth, feet on the desk, he gave himself to dreaming of the wisdom and clear-cut neatness of that act of Intervention. Then he picked up the cable again. It was the first of July, and Lucy Marvin was sailing on the second. There was no time to lose. He packed a suitcase and caught the boat for Shanghai.

The missionary hostel in Yokohama was in a big house on the Bluff and was managed, among a multitude of other things, by the Rev. Silas and Mrs. Humphreys. Nothing is known of the Rev. Silas, except that he liked pineapple. But we know more about his wife, who was a tiny, sandy-haired, freckled woman, plain and charming and full of human understanding. It was to that hostel, and Mrs. Humphreys, that Thomas J. Jones took his bride-to-be, having met her in the Mitsui Maru.

'Welcome to the Orient, my dear,' said Mrs. Humphreys, shaking hands with the girl. 'Do sit down, both of you, and we shall presently have some tea.' She put a

cake and some tinned pineapple on the table, and turned to the girl. 'So he's found you, after all. You know, my dear, he was in an awful dither trying to think how to find you on the boat.'

'It happened quite simply, Mrs. Humphreys,' the girl said, smiling, and sat down on the sofa. 'The Japanese purser said, "Hah, Miss Marvin, please, gentleman for you." And it was done.'

She laughed, and so did Mrs. Humphreys, but not Jones. He relived the uncomfortable moment when, hat in hand, under the stares of critical onlookers, he had advanced and said, 'Miss Marvin? I'm Jones.' The girl had exclaimed, 'Oh, Mr. Jones!' and a lanky man with a thin black moustache had sniggered. A rush of acute childish shame reddened Jones' face and left it peevish.

Mrs. Humphreys sat down and looked the girl over. 'So you're Lucy Marvin,' she said meditatively. 'Let's see, Marvin, Marvin. Don't seem to remember any Marvins. Missionaries, my dear?'

'Oh, yes, they were,' replied the girl. 'They worked in China and I lost them both in a plague epidemic when I was quite a baby. That was seventeen years ago,' she added weightily. 'An aunt brought me up with the help of the mission. I fear she thought me rather a nuisance.'

'What a shame,' commented Mrs. Humphreys, without any show of sorrow. 'I gather you and Mr. Jones have never met before?'

The girl went pink in the face. 'Well, no, we haven't. You see, last winter, the secretary of the mission wrote me a letter. He wanted to know if I'd like to work in China and, if yes, he said, would I marry a young man who was already there. I thought it over and said I would. I owe so much to the mission! It was the right thing to do, wasn't it, Mrs. Humphreys?'

'M'yes,' said the elder lady, and glanced wistfully at the young couple. If sulky—and why he should sulk on such an occasion, for the love of her Mrs. Humphreys could not imagine—Jones was a big, healthy boy, bronzed and athletic. The girl was exquisite. Both were reckless, because so young, but at least, they were neither deformities nor cretins. So far, so good, and it was possibly all for the best.

'It was certainly brave of you,' she said. 'I think you're lucky, you two, very, very lucky.'

Jones looked up sharply. 'Why lucky?'

The icy contempt of the question insensed Mrs. Humphreys. 'I thought perhaps you'd noticed that she's very lovely,' she retorted, and threw the girl into confusion. She ached to give Jones a piece of her mind, but managed to rein in her tongue.

'I haven't failed to notice that,' he muttered, with a quick baleful look at her. 'I'm grateful to Miss Marvin for her decision to become my wife. But why attribute to luck—a meaningless conception—what is the product of wise Providential scheming?'

'Well, I never!' gasped Mrs. Humphreys. 'D'you mean to say that Providence's gone out of its way to find a pretty girl for you?'

'A pretty girl! Who thinks of pretty girls?' he growled, with distaste. Had she been an hostile unbeliever, he would have shut up like a clam. But she belonged to the inner circle, and her opinions, however crudely put, could not be ignored. But she could, and would, be admonished. 'What is a woman's outward form?' he continued sternly. 'An ephemeral lure, a prod, the means to an end. A woman is not a plaything. Her beauty, like lustful love unavoidable in the long run, is not in itself the object. All women, without distinction, are equally eligible, all equally deserving —'

'So much so,' flared up the admonished one, 'that some men offer thanks for good wives, and some wail on bended knees for deliverance from bad ones.'

It was distressing. What was the use of arguing with her—of bandying words with one whose familiarity with moral dogma had bred undiscipline akin to contempt? He sighed despondently. 'I neither offer thanks nor wail, my dear lady. Never. I have a place in the scheme of things, or I wouldn't be here. I think it impertinent to pray even for help in one's work; presumptuous to give thanks for the elements of one's existence. My heart is always open to guidance, and where I'm guided, there I go. It's just that His will be done.'

He relaxed, confident that an aura of seemliness had been induced; but now, the

girl, whose amused eyes had been twinkling at him over the handkerchief she held at her lips, joined the debate. 'And yet,' she said vivaciously, 'the old gardener at the college where I was used to say, "Rely on God, but stick up for yourself".'

'And blessed be he who knows what he's talking about,' cut in Mrs. Humphreys, pouring out the tea.

'But to return to our muttons,' she resumed, 'Silas says you are to have two weeks in which to get used to each other before you're married. And you'll need them, too. What's two weeks when you've got to break the ice and get friendly and intimate with each other? It wouldn't do to marry at arm's length, if you know what I mean. But do you know what I mean? Well, to make the best of it, you'd better find a nice secluded spot.' She smiled nostalgically, and went crimson in the face. 'And now, my dears, I'll leave you to yourselves, and run. I'm terribly busy today. Just leave some pineapple for Silas. He loves it so.'

They left some pineapple for Silas, and, before the sun had set, Lucy Marvin had gobbled up Thomas J. Jones. It happened on a steep hillside on the way home from the lunar landscape of the Yokohama golf course. Forgetting his companion, Jones was scrambling up the hill in giant heaves. Tired and breathless, Lucy caught hold of his arm. The shock of it stopped him. The arm hung rigid at first, then bent slowly at the elbow, and they were standing arm-in-arm. His head swivelled to the right and down. Rashly he looked straight into the sea-green depth of her up-raised eyes. They remained wide open. The Bluff seemed to rock. He could not take his eyes off her. She seemed unreal, shining, dazzling, miraculous—her face, person, movements—and quite unbelievable.

'Lucy!' he croaked in a loud, unnatural voice.

Her hold on his arm tightened. At tea she had decided to make a good wife for him. People had been unkind to him in the past; but she would smooth things out for him, and shelter him from bitter tongues, like Mrs. Humphrey's.

'Lucy,' he said, softly. 'What is this? Who are we? Why? Strangers—we were at the opposite ends of the earth, mere names. The Finger moved, and we sped unerringly to each other, like ships that sail through the night. And lo! here we stand on the threshold of a life, awaiting His blessing. Though why it should be particularly you and me, it is not given unto us to understand.'

'I'm not going to try to understand, Tommy,' she whispered.

He whisked her up the hill in a flash. On the way back to town, he lectured her at length on the miracle of Divine Intervention and the loving work of beneficent Guidance. When they saw the lights of Yokohama, she gently guided him to Motomachi, a dazzling street where shops displayed such lovely things in the windows. And the next morning, they found that tree.

It was an extraordinary tree, and it grew at Honmoku, a strip of land between the sea and the foot of the Bluff. Its trunk was three feet high and six across and, shooting out from it in all directions, were massive branches which crept along the ground at first, then shot straight up and exploded, so to speak, into a leafy canopy as dense and flat as a pancake. That morning, they strolled into the coolness of its shade, and settled in the crook of one of the branches. It was delightfully peaceful there. You can imagine them, if you like, spending the twelve remaining days under that tree; making for it first thing in the morning. They walk briskly and in step, Jones burdened with a lunch-basket on one side and Lucy's elbow on the other. Her face uptilted to him, she puts all her weight on his arm. He bears it like a feather, smiling into her eyes, so open and receptive. Mrs. Humphreys rejoices—they are badly in love. But not another word about it from me. I must get on with this story.

There came at last the day which preceded that of their wedding and departure for China. Humphreys had promised to marry them at eleven, and the liner was sailing at three. After an early lunch, they had booked their passage and had strolled out to Honmoku to say good-bye to their tree. Jones was sitting in his usual place, with Lucy mainly in his arms and partly on the tree. Her eyes were closed. They had already done some kissing, and Jones,

to whom she was still unbelievable, was studying her face in an attempt to get used to her as a fact.

She sighed happily. 'Just fancy, Tommy. The clerk wrote on the tickets, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Jones.'

'That's where you lose your individuality, my dear,' he said ponderously.

'I don't mind that in the least,' she murmured. 'I love it. So it's Thomas J., after all.'

'Of course. Why?'

'The people at home were so funny, Tommy. The secretary wasn't at all sure if it was Thomas J. or J. Thomas. He said to me, "You'll be met in Japan by Tommy Jones. To be precise, by J. Thomas Jones. No, sorry, Thomas J. Jones. But is it he? Just a moment." He asked the girl at the typewriter, a tall girl with a sulky face—I didn't like her at all—"Miss Green, which of the Tommy Joneses is Miss Marvin to marry?" And she said, "J. Thomas Jones. No, I beg your pardon, Thomas J. Jones. Yes, I'm positive it's Thomas J. The cable went to Hankow." The secretary kissed me on the forehead and said, "There you are, my child, God bless you." And as I went out of the room, Miss Green said haughtily, "Good-bye. I hope you like it." They were a scream, Tommy.'

'They are a scream,' he agreed, with feeling. 'That dear old factotum of ours is a ghastly, unmitigated nuisance. We have a young fellow in Tientsin—I haven't met him yet—who calls himself J. Thomas Jones. Well, neither of us has yet achieved independent existence. They keep muddling us up. We get each other's letters and parcels; we even get slanged out for each other's sins. So he couldn't make up his mind which of us you'd marry? How true to form!'

'And supposing he cabled you now to send me on to J.T.?' she said meditatively. 'Then cabled him to return me to you, and cabled you again that he rather thought it was J.T. I should marry.' She paused to think it over, and liked the idea. 'I see myself a bedraggled woman with suffering eyes for ever bumping into you two,' she declaimed dramatically. 'A sort of wandering Jewess.' She burst out laughing, and laughed and laughed.

'Lucy,' said Jones woodenly, 'frankly, did they tell you at home you'd marry J. Thomas Jones and live in Tientsin?'

'Darling!' she cried. 'But I've just told you what they told me. Have I upset you with this nonsense? Ah, but how touchy you are!'

He gulped. 'I fear a criminal mistake has been committed, Lucy. I'm not your man. They meant you for J. Thomas Jones.'

She struggled to sit up, and he helped

her. 'You're talking utter nonsense,' she said, eyeing him suspiciously and patting her hair.

'Oh, how I wish I were!' he mumbled, his mouth trembling. 'But I'm not, Lucy, and we must tell Humphreys at once.'

'But what is there to tell?' she began. And then it occurred to her that, in that frame of mind, he needed delicate handling. 'Let's talk it over quietly first, Tommy,' she continued soothingly. 'Now then, what makes you think there's been a mistake?'

He plucked a blade of grass and stuck it in his teeth. 'When did they tell you whom you'd marry?' he asked her.

'When I called for the tickets and money,' she said. 'I just told you what happened.'

He nodded darkly. 'I thought so. You see, Lucy, I hadn't asked for a wife. Someone else has started the ball rolling and, judging by what you told me, it must have been J. Thomas Jones. There must have been some correspondence, too. No doubt they told him who and what you were, and he confirmed the arrangement. They should then have confirmed it to you in writing, and told you who he was, but of course, Miss Green forgot to do it. And then, the same impossible Miss Green addressed that cable Jones Chinamish Hankow, instead of Jones Chinamish Tientsin.'

'But how stupid!' she exclaimed.

He sighed. 'Stupid and tragic, Lucy. Consider the position: that man is now waiting for you to turn up, and you're here flirting with me—even worse than flirting.'

'Flirting, Tommy!'

'Well, I don't know how else to put it,' he said with a touch of irritation. 'What I know is that we must do something at once. Cables must be sent, home and to Tientsin, and things put right. Good thing we found it out before it was too late.'

She sidled up to him and slipped an arm round his shoulders. 'Listen, Tommy,' she said excitedly. 'Let's make it too late. We say nothing. Old Silas marries us tomorrow, and who could undo it then? And later we could say we didn't know there'd been a mistake.'

He removed her arm from his shoulder and glared at her. 'I didn't expect such things from you,' he growled. 'What are you suggesting? That I conceal the truth, let everybody down, and steal the promised wife of a brother-missionary? Shame on you, Lucy.'

She hid her face in her hands and shuddered. 'What awful words you use, Tommy! And you exaggerate so. Why a promised wife? I've never seen the man. How could I live with him when it's you I love, my darling? You don't know how much I love you, Tommy.'

It did not move him. He just sat there, elbows on his knees, thoughtful, gloomy, chewing the blade of grass and looking at nothing.

'God brought us together,' she resumed tearfully. 'You said so yourself. He meant us for each other.'

'You don't know what He meant,' he said dryly.

It was exasperating—he, so cold, so ready, so resistant, like a brick wall. 'Ah, but I do, I do,' she insisted. 'God is kind. Would He bring us together just to tear us apart? He knows what He wants, and does it. Don't tell me God is inconsistent, Tommy.'

He stopped chewing. 'Take care. You blaspheme.'

'But what does it matter?' she cried passionately. 'Oh, I don't care! You said His guidance was good, but this is spiteful and cruel!'

Slowly he got up and cast upon her a glance of sorrowful pity. 'I can't listen to this any more,' he said sadly. 'You're trying to tempt me away from duty, but you shall not succeed. Good-bye. I'm going.'

Her knees gave way, and she sank to the ground, her arms embracing his legs. 'Don't go, Tommy, I implore you, don't,' she sobbed brokenly.

He stood there rigid, dazed with conflicting emotions. His heart was broken; his duty called; that poor, misguided creature at his feet. What should he do? He raised his eyes aloft, praying for guidance. But it was not the Heavens he saw. He saw the canopy of leaves pierced in many places with shafts of golden light. It was the home of countless birds and insects. He saw up there an insect crawling upside down from leaf to leaf. It was exactly like

a housefly two inches long, a cicada. It moved painfully, sluggishly, ignoring obstacles and always heading in the same direction. At times it clung by some of its legs, the others clutching empty air. At times it lost its hold on the leaves and fell like a stone, but righted itself in time and soared back to the same place with a whirring of wings. And obstinately it resumed its crawling, always in the same direction. And in the antics of the insect, Jones saw the answer to his prayer:

> With God-given wings to fly upon, why crawl?

He disengaged himself as gently as he could, and walked away.

Such are the whirligigs of life. Jones walked away from Lucy, and went on walking and walking. Growing turmoil had ousted his wooden calm. His heart was shrieking out for Lucy; his soul demanded her instant dismissal; his conscience worried with heavy pangs, alternately, his heart and his soul. He spent the rest of the day tramping about on the Bluff, until, at half-past eight that night, some instinct brought him back to the hostel, completely broken in body and soul. His mind was made up—he must tell Humphreys—but he had not yet decided to act. In fact, he even feared that Lucy, in her distress, might already have blurted out the news. He stole into the dining-room, expecting the worst, but nothing happened. Lucy was absent. Mrs. Humphreys was sipping her coffee. Her husband's spoon was clicking rapidly, collecting the last drops of juice from a plate that had once held pineapple.

'Dear me, you're late,' commented Mrs. Humphreys. 'Do ring the bell for something to eat.' And when he had sat down: 'What is the matter with you two? First, Lucy comes home with a splitting headache. Now you, all droopy, like a sick canary. Is it a tiff? Or have you been eating something?'

He mumbled something inarticulate about the hot weather. Half-way through the meal, he asked to be excused and went to his room and to bed. He tried to think over his impasse, and thought and thought, till thought broke up into disjointed, senselessly-repeated words, and his system, unable to endure the torture, demanded action. Mechanically, he got up, slipped on his shoes and climbed out of the window. Outside, the moonlit road was deserted. He looked round vacantly, and then his legs took charge, and they carried him to Honmoku, past their tree, now dark and forbidding, to a spot on the shingly beach whence a chain of rocks, like a crazy causeway, jutted out some fifty yards into the sea. Jumping from rock to rock, he reached the last, and sat down. The night was hot and still. A reddish moon was setting. In its ghostly light, the calm water was black, like pitch besplashed with blood.

He was dreadfully tired and icily calm. Nothing but water in front of him and on the sides—black, redly glistening water. That tragic muddle behind him. He felt hemmed in and oppressed. Was life worth living? he asked himself. A plunge into the sinister water would take him out of that maze and douse for ever doubts and urges.

'Wages of loyalty,' he muttered, bitterly. 'To Thee, my Lord and Creator, have I devoted my life, and I have loved Thee with all my being. Thy work, though imperfectly, have I done with utmost care and zeal. Where, Lord God, have I erred to earn so summary a dismissal?'

He paused, as if waiting for a reply, but none came. Hot fury gripped his throat and flared up madly in his eyes. His body, convulsed with tension, gathered itself on the rock in a spider-like knot. 'The worthy means Thou hast employed, Almighty Lord,' he snarled, glaring at the sinking moon. 'To throw me in the arms of a lovable woman; to make me love her; to jerk her away. A bad schoolboy could invent no better. And now, Thou wouldst besmirch me with the dishonour of self-inflicted death. But die I'll not. Puny though I am, I defy Thee. Thou, compassionate Father. Thou hast denied me Thy great compassion. Use then Thy might. Smite me with Thy wrath, for kill myself I'll not. I've done with Thee. Thou hearest? Done, done with Thee and Thine.'

Words failed him; and something vital might have snapped in him under the strain, but there came to him, wafted from the sea, an imperceptible movement of the

air. It was so light that not a ripple was raised on the water, not a hair of his disturbed. But it brought a hint of coolness which soothed his burning head. It was as though a hand, immense and mighty like all creation, yet lighter than a ray of dawn, had caressed his face and patted his head with loving softness. A moment, and it was gone, and Jones collapsed in a pitiful huddle. But great, healing peace descended on him, smothered his doubts and quenched his fury.

He rested for perhaps an hour. Then, he stretched himself and got up. The moon had set. A gentle breeze was blowing from the land; the tide was flowing and it was time to return to the beach. He felt refreshed and contented. 'Oh, be it as it may,' he said aloud, jumping from rock to rock. He made for the hostel and bed, and was instantly asleep.

Next morning, he was only slightly late for breakfast. The Rev. Silas Humphreys had eaten and gone. His wife was sipping tea and reading a bulky letter. She nodded to Jones and went on reading. Jones helped himself to a plateful of ham and eggs, and sat down. Munching ham, he bethought himself of Lucy, without any sadness, and the solemn words he had uttered two weeks before began to march in stately procession through his mind: 'And lo! here we stand on the threshold of a life —'

'Dear, oh, dear, what a shame,' said Mrs. Humphreys, plaintively. 'And such a nice, clever boy, too. I know his mother well. She'll be terribly upset.' She read more of the letter. 'Amy says they all had oysters and nothing happened to them. Only he went down with typhoid, and in a week he was dead. He died on the fourteenth. The fourteenth. I remember. It was the day you met Lucy. Dear me, how such things happen side by side. You meet your sweet girl, and he dies, perhaps even at the same moment.' Dreamy-eyed, she gave herself to contemplation of the disparity.

'But who, O who, in the name of all that's living, has died?' he asked, smiling.

It brought her back to earth. 'Stupid of me,' she said. 'It's your namesake, Tommy Jones. This is from Amy Barrows.' She waved the letter at him. 'From Tientsin'.

There was a moment of heavy silence.

'God!' said Thomas J. Jones.

'Mr. Jones!'

But he was past all niceties of speech and deportment. He jumped like one demented, upsetting his chair, tore out of the room, up the stairs and straight into Lucy's bedroom. In bed, under only a sheet, as the morning was hot, she was softly crying into her pillow. With a yell, 'He's dead, Lucy, dead!' Jones threw himself on her. But Mrs. Humphreys was on his heels, arriving, as she was to put it later, just in the nick of time.

'Let go of her!' she shouted, tugging at the collar of his coat. 'Let go, I tell you! Don't you be so greedy. Can't you wait two hours till Silas has said his words?'

Weak though she was, she dragged him away from the bed, pushed him out into the passage and slammed the door.

Alone in the passage, Jones became thoughtful. It had occurred to him that, at bottom, the trend of relevant events had been mysterious. Had his last night's prayer, as he tactfully called it, been granted when he met Lucy two weeks before? Or had Miss Green been guided a month ago to misaddress that cable because, in a fit of ugly temper, he had refused last night to jump from that rock? In either case, the past had been remodelled from the present to suit last night's future. His mind refused to deal with it.

'And why, why must it be particularly you and me?' he muttered passionately. 'I fear it is not given unto us to understand.'

However, as promised, the Rev. Silas Humphreys married them at eleven.

The Visit

PHILIP OAKES

WHEN she was eighteen everyone remarked what an attractive girl Madge Porter was. At twenty-one she was considered a good sort and a good sport by most of the young men in the neighbourhood, and on her twenty-third birthday she became engaged to marry Andrew Fleming, whose father was the director of a textile firm. The engagement was broken after six months and Andrew married a young woman from his father's office within the year.

Madge took up golf and over hot coffee in the club-house was proposed to by a widower named Charles Mander. She hesitated and finally accepted, only to break the engagement because Charles was nearly twice her age.

When she was thirty, Madge developed a nervous stomach and stayed at home to care for her widowed mother, who let it be known that her daughter's interests were those nearest her heart.

Mrs. Porter's interest in her daughter became in time the determined pursuit of a worthy husband for her only child, and her constant hints to Madge to get about and meet people became increasingly wearing to both mother and daughter.

'Are you tired of having me around?' Madge would ask spitefully. 'Are people beginning to ask if I shall ever be married?'

'Of course not, my dear,' Mrs. Porter would reply. 'All the same it's hardly fair to expect you to stay here and look after an old woman like me. You should have friends your own age.'

'I am forty-two years old. All my friends are married and have their own families. I don't care to look after other people's children,' Madge would state flatly, ending the conversation for that day.

How she could make such a statement she did not know. She knew only that twice she had almost been married and that on each occasion she had been unable to meet the requirements of the situation. She was deeply and constantly ashamed.

On an afternoon in September, Gerald Fox, a nephew of Mrs. Porter called at the house. He wore a rough khaki uniform and his hair was badly cut.

'Madge will be so glad to see you,' said Mrs. Porter. 'We often talk about you.'

Gerald turned his beret in his hands and smiled. He felt ill at ease in a house that belonged exclusively to women and the bland smell of soap and fabrics in deep drawers unsettled him.

'I'm on leave,' he said 'I just thought I'd call.'

'You're so tall,' said Mrs. Porter 'when did we last see you. Is it three years?'

'I expect so,' said Gerald. 'I was just a kid.'

'But you're a man now,' said Mrs. Porter.

'The Army thinks so,' said Gerald.

He kissed Madge on the cheek as she shook his hand. 'I wouldn't have known you,' he said.

Madge laughed nervously. 'Wouldn't you. Have I changed?'

'Not changed,' he said 'you're exactly the same. I was expecting you to be different. I always remember you exactly as you are now.'

'But it's three years,' said Mrs. Porter 'we've all changed.'

They sat down to tea and Gerald delighted them by his manners and his dry account of Army life. 'I shall be glad when they've finished with me,' he admitted.

'But you must have a lot of fun,' said Mrs. Porter. 'Haven't you got a girl?'

'No,' said Gerald, shrinking from any such confession. 'I haven't got a girl.'

'I don't believe you,' said Mrs. Porter smiling rosily, 'every soldier has a girl.'

'Not necessarily,' said Madge, 'there's no law which says Gerald must have a girl. He can please himself.'

'Of course he can,' said Mrs. Porter. 'I was just saying that it was unusual.'

Gerald looked at each of the two women. He did not like what was going on. To end it he said 'Of course, if I met one like Madge, that would be different.'

'You see,' said Mrs. Porter 'it's just a matter of time.'

Madge cut her cake into such small pieces that they crumbled on the plate. 'Time and inclination,' she said, 'one is no good without the other.'

Gerald smiled across the tea-cups. 'You're absolutely right,' he said.

Madge looked at him suspiciously and seeing no mockery in his face, smiled back at him.

After tea, Mrs. Porter went upstairs to turn down the beds and Gerald was left alone with Madge. 'You mustn't mind Mother,' she said, 'she says things like that all the time.'

'I don't mind,' he said 'I can stand any amount of teasing.'

'How lucky you are,' said Madge.

She stood against the window, watching the light fade, and, affectionately, Gerald touched her arm. She was not startled. In fact she would have been offended had he not done so. His hand was warm and hard, and she felt the broken glaze of callouses on the palm catch on her dress.

Mrs. Porter re-entered the room and switched on the light. 'The nights are drawing in,' she said briskly, 'it'll be dark soon.'

'I'd better be going,' said Gerald, but both women protested in harmony. 'It's early yet,' said Madge 'are you in a hurry?'

'Play something for us Madge,' begged Mrs. Porter. 'Play my favourite.'

Arranging her dress, Madge sat at the piano and searched among the sheets of music. 'That one,' said her mother 'the one you just picked up.'

'Not that,' said Madge, rearranging the sheets. 'It's so old. No one plays it now.'

'I like it,' said Mrs. Porter firmly. 'It was your first party piece. You play it beautifully.'

'Please mother,' said Madge 'choose something else.'

'Don't be silly, dear,' said Mrs. Porter sensibly. 'That one. With the words.' She spread the music on the piano. 'Madge has a charming voice,' she told Gerald.

The thin chords rose from the piano and Mrs. Porter settled herself contentedly, watching her daughter's straight back.

'Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar,' sang Madge, her voice weak and tuneful in the small room 'where are you now, where are you now?'

Mrs. Porter smiled fondly. The pedals of the piano squeaked fortissimo. Madge turned the page thankfully. 'Where are you now?' she concluded.

The inquiry faded among the furniture and Gerald cleared his throat. Madge felt the cold as though a door had been opened. 'It was Mother's favourite,' she said.

'You play very well,' he replied. 'I know nothing about music but I know that much.'

'I'm cold,' said Madge, chafing her arms. 'I should have worn a thicker dress.'

'I don't feel it,' said Gerald. 'I must have good circulation.'

'You have young blood,' said Madge. 'We really mustn't keep you any longer.'

Gerald kissed her goodbye. 'I'll give your love to the family,' he promised.

Walking to the bus stop, he tried to determine where he should take Sylvia the next day. He had no more relations to visit.

The English

The English are our friends of course
And oh we love them worse and worse
We like to see England looking shabby and poor
And to know that she will not be our rival any more.
You look a little pale. Is anything amiss?
Do you not like our beautiful peace-kiss?

STEVIE SMITH

In the Park

Walking one day in the park in winter
I heard two silvered gentlemen talking
Two old friends, elderly, walking talking
There by the silver lake mid-pooled black in winter.

Pray for the mute who have no word to say
Cried the one old gentleman, not because they are dumb
But their brains are weak, and the weak
Thoughts banging in the brain generate a sort of heat
Yet cannot speak.
Thoughts that are bound without sound in the tomb
(Cried the old gentleman) of the brain's room, yet wound
Pray for the mute.

But, said his friend, see how they swim
Free in the element best loved, so wet; yet breathe
As a visitor to the air come; plunge then, rejoicing more
Having left it briefly for the visited shore, to come
Home to the wet
Windings that are yet
Best loved though familiar; and oh so right the wet
Stream and the wave; he is their pet.

Finished, the mild friend
Smiled, put aside his well-tuned hearing instrument
And it seemed
The happiness he spoke of
Irradiated all his members and his heart
Barked with delight to stress
So much another's happiness.

But what other? The sombre first
Speaker reversed
The happy moment; cried again
Mousing for pain, Pray for the mute (a tear drops)
They are like the brute.

Struck by the shout
That he may not know what it's about
The deaf friend again
Up-ends his hearing instrument to relieve the strain
What? Oh shock, 'Pray for the mute?'
I thought you said the newt.

Now which is Christianer pray, of these old friends the one who will say
For pain's sake, pray, pray; or the deaf other that rejoices
So much that the cool amphibian
Shall have his happiness and all things rejoicing with him.

But wait; the first speaker now, the old sombre one,
Is penetrated quite by his friend's sun
And, Oh blessed You, he cries, to show
So in simplicity what is true.
All his face is suffused with happy tears and as he weeps he sings a happy song
Happier even than his friend's song was, righting the wrong.
So two heads, better than one, finally strike truth in this happy song.

Praise, cries the weeping softened one, not pray, praise, all men
Praise is the best prayer, the least self is there, that least's release.

The Jungle Husband

Dearest Evelyn I often think of you
Out with the guns in the jungle stew
Yesterday I hitta potamus
I put the measurements down for you but they got lost in the fuss
It's not a good thing to drink out here
You know; I've practically given it up dear.
Tomorrow I am going alone a long way
Into the jungle. It is all gray
But green on top
Only sometimes when a tree has fallen
The sun comes down plop it is quite appalling.
You never want to go in a jungle pool
In the hot sun, it would be the act of a fool
Because it's always full of anacondas, Evelyn, ot looking ill-fed
I'll say. So no more now from your loving husband Wilfred.

Perpetuum Mobile: The Broken Record

THEME AND VARIATIONS

JAMES KIRKUP

I did not know
What love might be
Until you gave
Your hand to me.

I did not know
Not know not know
What love might be might be,
Not wishing I might understand
The wonders found within the land
Of grief and lost within the grave,
Until until you gave you gave
your hand to me, your hand
To me, you gave your hand to me.

For in your hand
I felt your heart,
And found I held
The rose of thought.

For in your hand
Your hand your hand
I felt I felt your heart,
Your breath that goes and comes and goes,
And slows and quickens, quickens, slows
Quick-quickens, willingly compelled,
And found and found I held I held
The rose of thought, the rose
Of thought, I held the rose of thought.

The thought was sweet,
The rose was wild,
And love was love
To man and child.

The thought was sweet
Was sweet was sweet,
The rose was wild was wild,
A bird sang and the spring began
The song that cannot cannot can
Be sung, and makes our living live,
That love is love is love is love
Is love to child and man
And child is love to man and child.

The thought is sweet,
The rose is wild,
And love is love
To man and child.

The World of Books

FIRST AND LAST LOVES

By John Betjeman. *John Murray.* 20s.

Reviewed by Edmund Penning-Rowsell

Sir Kenneth Clark remarked in his recently reissued *The Gothic Revival* how little has been written by John Betjeman, although his influence on taste has been so considerable. And as nearly all his volumes of prose and verse are out of print, a collected—perhaps 'congregated' would be preferred by the author—edition of some of his prose writings is welcome. It enables us to see where he stands—and where he does not. For there is a danger of Mr. Betjeman becoming an institution, as misunderstood in his way as Bernard Shaw. No doubt the misunderstanding has been due in both cases to a faulty appreciation of ingeniously applied paradox and irony. Mr. Betjeman's active and merited championship of undervalued Victoriana has led in some quarters to an indiscriminate appreciation of the less attractive products of nineteenth-century industry, art and taste. Therefore it is well to be reminded in his essays on church architecture, reprinted here, that while he has a human warmth for, and a spiritual accord with, the occupants of pitch-pine pews in gas-lit chapels, he has as little regard for the pews as he has for encaustic tiles or church windows filled with violet and yellow 'stained glass'. His more sober prose corrects impressions unwittingly given by his satirical verse; for if he often enjoys the second-rate, he certainly detests the third-rate and the pretentious.

In this very varied selection of articles, addresses and broadcasts, the most striking feature is Mr. Betjeman's remarkably keen observation. He misses little, whether it be the colour of railway station nameplates, the proportions of window-glazing bars or the sight, through lace curtains, of military widows eating their *en pension* luncheons in Cheltenham. His essays on Aberdeen, Leeds and other towns not only induce the reader to take a second look at these places, if possible, but, more important, lead him to cast a more critical eye over his own surroundings, and then perhaps to join Mr. Betjeman's crusade against concrete lamp-posts and the slick 'period modern' sanctioned by Fine Art Commissions and Industrial Design committees.

At times his energetic, witty denunciations of particular features of contemporary life, combined with his rehabilitation of hitherto neglected aspects of the recent past may, some will feel, lead to a false emphasis, a backward-looking nostalgia supported by not altogether fair appeals to prejudice. The hideous uniformity of branch-shop façades in every High Street, plastic tea-cups and drab cafeterias, are fair game. But in the introductory essay 'Love is Dead' there is a dispirited note, a tone of defeat, which is at variance with the zest for life and people which is Mr. Betjeman's most engaging quality.

The longer contributions to this volume, including one reprinted from *World Review*, are largely concerned with architecture. Those who still regard Mr. Betjeman as an amiable rider of hobby-horses may be surprised at the breadth of his knowledge and his sharp eye for detail. Lighter in tone are his broadcast evocations of West of England towns and his delightful picture of the Isle of Man, dedicated to holiday-makers from working-class Lancashire. In contrast he strikes the suburban note on sedate, respectable Sidmouth:

> What romances must have started over coffee in basket chairs in the lounge, or on the hotel court during a strenuous single! What last walks there must have been at the end of the holidays, while in one of the glittering hotels in the valley below, parents are trying to like one another over a rubber of bridge.

Mr. Betjeman must reconsider his impliedly abandoned devotions.

A MAN OF LAW'S TALE

By Lord Macmillan. *Macmillan.* 21s.

Reviewed by Thomas Southall

The odd thing about this book is that it is interesting. Lord Macmillan has no inside information to unfold about 'famous trials', such as accounts for the popularity of many legal autobiographies; he was not that kind of Counsel. Indeed, he only mentions three criminal cases, one of which, a conviction under a bye-law made by the Scottish Fishery Board, raised such important questions of international law that the Appeal from the Sheriff Court was heard before a bench of twelve Judges —hardly the kind of 'human story' to appeal to readers of the Sunday newspapers.

He did, however, have one experience of defending an alleged murderer and, under specific instructions from his client, passionately protested that the man was sane, in the face of equally forceful submissions by the Crown that the prisoner was quite mad and totally unfit to plead. Otherwise, we are regaled with a brief selection of the more important causes in which the author was engaged, causes interesting indeed to lawyers, and far-reaching in their results, but not of the kind to cause a queue outside the Law Courts.

And yet the book is interesting; chiefly perhaps because it is a well-told story of the happy, successful life of an extremely nice, uncomplicated person. The author obviously enjoyed writing about himself, and he could, and did, look back over his career with real pleasure. He was delighted, almost naïvely, at his own success, which, if it did not come too easily, came stage by stage without a set-back. His account of his parents, the land of his birth, and his marriage show that he considered himself fortunate in them all. The book tells of things which are worth recording before they are forgotten: the details of Call to the Bar in Scotland, the powers of the Dean of Faculty, and of a state of society in which a member of the Carlton Club could become a Scottish Law Officer in a Labour Government without being expelled. It records an age that is almost over, where to be educated meant to be cultivated, when most lawyers were 'learned', but not wholly in the law, and clever boys of fifteen and a half did not become 'first-year specialists'. It shows too, the enormous amount of unpaid, unspectacular valuable public work which was done by Macmillan. One wonders whether the next generation will be able to provide people with sufficiently widely informed minds to undertake such work; certainly at present few are allowed means to be able to do so. 'I was not much of a success as the first Minister of Information.' This is the only taste of failure that Lord Macmillan seems to have had. He certainly was not a success. To those who knew that horrible place at that time, his failure was a tribute to his character. If one wanted to criticise the person revealed in this book, one would say that Lord Macmillan was indiscriminating in his assessment of people. Numerous public figures are mentioned, and for none of them has he anything but praise.

THE IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON SOCIETY

By Bertrand Russell. *Allen & Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

Reviewed by C. H. Sisson

Although the social views of this famous nobleman have always owed as much to the Whig traditions of his house as to science, no one seeing the title of this book could doubt the aptness of the subject-matter to this author. He is familiar with the habits of the nebulae, and the analysis of society has engaged him as much, if with rather less impressive results, as the study of mathematics. His conclusion from the latter to the former has been that it 'is not easy to maintain a belief in one's own cosmic importance' in view of the 'overwhelming statistics' of astronomy. He now presents as lucid and brilliant a study as is possible within the limitations implied by this confusion of categories. And no reservation one may have about his general attitude to society can spoil one's pleasure in the force and grace of his exposition. There are the jokes, which in the context have their charm, about Mrs. Aristotle and about the theological rabbits. There is occasionally a flash of satire, as when he

says: 'It is for future scientists to . . . discover exactly how much it costs per head to make children believe that snow is black, and how much less it would cost to make them believe it is dark grey.' There the grace of style is also the point of the argument. For in this book Bertrand Russell maintains as he has done more exhaustively, elsewhere, the virtues of submission to the truth. He produces as an exhibit that sentence of Marx which puts the prophet outside civilisation: 'Philosophers have only *interpreted* the world . . . , but the real task is to change it.' And he puts John Dewey beside Marx as one who substitutes utility for truth. It is Bertrand Russell's tenacity in holding the opposite view which makes it imprudent to ignore what he writes.

SIDNEY GODOLPHIN

His Life and Times

By Sir Tresham Lever, Bt. *John Murray.* 25s.

Reviewed by J. Cyril Marsh-Edwards

The truth of the epigram 'History is written by the Conquerors' is as well exemplified in the detraction and calumny heaped by the triumphant Whigs upon their Tory opponents as in the vilification of Richard III by the scriveners of the usurping Tudor. Of the Tory leaders those who suffered most were the two to whom Queen Anne's reign owed its glory—Godolphin and Marlborough.

Sir Tresham Lever has produced an exhaustive and well-documented study of the Lord Treasurer's career, which should prove a positive contribution to his long overdue rehabilitation. The author has made full use of the fresh material that has come to light since the turn of the century, as well as of the unpublished correspondence preserved at Blenheim, Longleat and Wotton. From this it is possible to trace the motives behind the actions, not only of Godolphin himself but also of those around him. The charges of treasonable correspondence with the exiled James II while holding a high position in the councils of William III, of complacently eating the bread of one master while secretly promising service to another, as Macaulay phrases it, are exposed in all their falsity and, it is to be hoped, finally scotched. It must be remembered that these charges were first levelled by malicious Jacobites, embittered by their failure to induce him to join them, and copied, with joy and gladness, by the Whigs whose policy was to stigmatise all Tories as Jacobites and traitors. The letters also bring out clearly the difficulties that beset Godolphin and Marlborough in the conduct of the war. After the first flush of war-fever there was no united front in Parliament for its prosecution but continuous obstruction of the Government by Whigs and cliques of disgruntled Tories alike. As he was gradually forced to lean more and more upon the Whigs whom the Queen detested, so Godolphin lost her support, until finally the machinations of Harley through Mrs. Masham achieved his dismissal in a curt note ordering him to break his staff of office.

THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN PAUL CLAUDEL AND ANDRÉ GIDE

Translated by John Russell

Secker & Warburg. 25s.

Reviewed by Dwight Smith

André Gide's friendship with Paul Claudel was largely epistolatory—which was the chief reason why it lasted for twenty-six years. Mr. John Russell, in a short brilliant preface, and M. Robert Mallet, in an equally good and fairly long introduction, explain what Gide and Claudel were hoping to gain from their exchanges.

The letters themselves are courteous, sincere and moving, and in them can be seen once again that Gide genuinely wavered about going over to Catholicism. It was a fact that made Claudel both eloquent and subtle.

Gide's annoyance with the well-meaning Claudel finds expression in his *Journal* which is quoted with great effect in the present book. There is, too, an explanatory note to each of the letters which adds detail to the slow, fascinating story of two men burdened by a sense of too much good fortune. A trip is made, as it were, behind scenes, yet, at the same time, every word

is weighty with its air of truth; and at least one unforeseen result of reading these letters is the feeling of pleasure they inspire. It seems (oddly enough) a privilege to watch Claudel's attempt to win over the friend 'whom he dreaded to offend'; and it seems equally a privilege to examine, from fresh ground, André Gide's toughness and his struggle towards 'a goal of diversified harmony'.

The translation by Mr. John Russell is beyond praise and makes access to a world of spaciousness and repression all the easier. It lights up an age from which most readers will return—only to miss that air of awesome and ponderous excitement which remains part of a monument to luxury. Claudel had met his equal.

TO THE HAPPY FEW: SELECTED LETTERS OF STENDHAL

Translated by Norman Cameron

John Lehmann. 21s.

Reviewed by Cashenden Cass

The letters begin in 1800, when Stendhal, at the age of seventeen, forsook dancing lessons in Paris to join Napoleon's army in Italy, and continue until the day before his death in 1842. They have throughout that conversational, sparkling intelligence which emanates with unfair facility from most French novelists. But these letters are without vanity, which is rare. They are without sexual vanity which, in one so apparently devoted to the pursuit of women, is rarer still. I do not altogether believe in the epistolary lamentations of Stendhal when, time and again, some beautiful creature, after a happy liaison, spurns, tires of, and finally dismisses him. I suspect that he more than half brought about these ruptures of his own accord, in order to retain that roving and ruminating liberty he enjoyed even more than most writers and men. He does not believe, the letters often infer, in the achievement of personal happiness; his love affairs had therefore, eventually, and when he had gained much of the knowledge and experience that he was seeking, to fail. For he was then free to pursue the idea of love unencumbered by its physical disadvantages or distractions. Even his long and possessive love for his sister (his letters to her make the first third of the book) disappears when the circumstances combined for them to live happily together, and after the failure of this domestic arrangement, his letters to her cease.

But the difficult thing about freedom is what to do with it. A man less than very, very clever can become morassed in it. Stendhal, with all his passion, walked carefully. He valued his 'freedom' and used it wisely. He did not become needlessly embittered by the price it sometimes demands, nor did he use it, in spite of the extraordinary range of his interests, to clutter his mind with useless trivia. These letters do not waste time trying to posture or to impress. They explore. They witness. They show his growing contempt for society and his unimpaired idealisation of the individual. And always they have ideas. As they make their clear-sighted excursions into life, love, personalities, marriage (which he recommends to everyone except himself), the wonderful conflagration of Moscow, the startling encounter with Byron, Italy, Emperors, English gardens, and very much more, everything, and above all, the writer's own character, becomes enchantingly alive. And for those who need a comforting thought on their reading: 'I am confident,' he writes of England, 'that this nation will always furnish more than twenty enlightened and courageous men.'

THE GALLOPING CENTAUR

Poems 1933–1951

By Francis Berry. *Methuen.* 12s. 6d.

A CORRECT COMPASSION

And Other Poems

By James Kirkup. *Oxford University Press.* 8s. 6d.

Reviewed by James Turner

The Galloping Centaur is a collection of Francis Berry's poems, containing, amongst others, 'The Iron Christ', 'Murdock' and 'New Poems'. And perhaps 'Murdock' with its terror and haunting is the only poem which can persuade you into its world. The others—'a sort of poetic fireworks' as one critic called 'The Gospel of Fire'—do not seek to persuade. They are

volcanic, and like a volcano, they take no notice of those beneath them. This poetry compels you, suddenly takes you, and from one curious, rock-like word, propels you onward in a frantic race. It leaves great wounds; every nail is twice hammered home into flesh which quickly becomes raw. And this is not only because this poetry is fiery, immense, out-of-reach, but because the words of the poems are often no more than catalogues. The mind is wrenched; the saw of this poetry never leaves the soul to bleed quietly, but still and for ever must be gnawing at its frailty. And the poet's advance is not so much an advance of thought and subtlety (for subtlety is not one of his virtues) but an advance in speed, like a tornado. The fear is he will dissolve in a fire of his own creating.

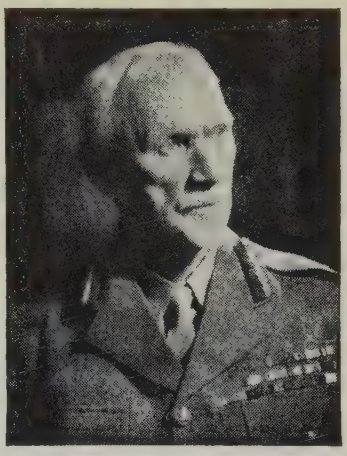
But with James Kirkup's poems (his reputation now well made) there is all the difference. Above all there is no exclusion of the reader. You are drawn into an intimacy of this world of poetry which is made of familiar words adorned with unexotic imagery. The poet does not persuade you to strange pathological paths but touches always the depth of truth. His poetry (and this latest volume is no different) has always revealed the astounding truth behind the small event or thing, behind the love-affair or the death of a child. Where there is a picture, 'A Character from Ronald Firbank', there is a startlingly clear painting; where there is a conceit, 'Stars Compared to Worms', there is a delicious subtlety, and where there is sorrow and pain, 'Human and Divine Love', there is:

> I will not learn to hate the visions of the heart!

These shorter poems are summed up in the title poem which describes the poet watching a surgeon performing a heart operation. I know of no poetry today which can compare with this perfectly controlled emotion (it seems to be the outcome of a mass of so-called war poetry) which is aseptic, unsentimental and beautiful as the surgeon's artistry. With the first incision,

> The flowing stroke is drawn like an uncalculated inspiration

you perceive the knife, the thin, swift cut and the full virtue of Kirkup's poetry.



JAN
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BY HIS SON

This biography of one of the greatest and most respected men of our time has a very special intimacy and authenticity, for this is a record of Smuts's life by his own son. It will be of the greatest interest at this time both for the portrait it paints and for the inside history of South Africa it relates; for the story of Smuts is the story of South Africa, and his life was spent fighting the political creed which lies behind the troubles in the Union today.

564 pp., sm. Demy 8vo, 24 pp. of illustrations and 5 maps 25/- *net*

THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE YEAR

CASSELL

THE FACE OF LONDON

By Harold P. Clunn. *Phoenix House.* 30s.

Reviewed by Rufus Noel-Buxton

This work, first available in the 1930's, has now been brought up to date to include the face of London up to 1951. And not only the face of London proper, but the full range of towns within one hour's rail journey of the capital. It is a major work, and an indispensable work, and we must congratulate Mr. Clunn on the most admirable, formidable and concise fruits of fifty years' endeavour.

Mr. Clunn is clearly an unqualified believer in the present physical entity and expansion of the greatest city in the world. He writes, for instance (dealing with Brighton), that 'like London, the larger it grows, the more attractive it becomes.' We cannot quite go with him. Yet there are traces of qualification in his faith when he is praising—and giving minute details of—the preservation against great opposition of some few acres of North London as parkland or the fight for Epping Forest to give physical redemption to the teeming millions of Londoners.

Yet, basically, he believes in the march of blocks and (to use Heine's phrase) London's 'stone forest of houses'. He gives you the names of the architects of an array of London public and commercial buildings that you would not otherwise easily obtain. Yet such passages, or others dealing with costs, or material ingredients (such as went to create the Victoria Embankment), are never dull or blurring of the main wider spirit of the book.

Many will share my exception taken to his praise of the Victorian and later scene at Westminster—compared to what Mr. Clunn calls 'the shabby Westminster' of the day when Wordsworth wrote his 'Westminster Bridge Sonnet'. At that time, in his opinion, the Abbey was the only feature of special interest. But now the higher buildings round it positively blunt its magic, and I doubt the sentiment of: 'What would the great poet have said to the wonderful transformation which has taken place?' The river is in chains and the water spirit is enfeebled.

But the author is a master of current fact, and in this mood he treats all past facts. The great commercial capital is his world, and every page breathes his sympathy. And he carries us with him. He is revealing of the interstices of social history when telling us of the first experiments with roundabouts, or one-way streets or traffic lights.

The book is finely illustrated with a great many illustrations; modern photographs and old prints set each other off. Finely chosen is the frontispiece of St. Paul's seen among bomb-site willow-herbs in the foreground.

GOLDEN EARTH, TRAVELS IN BURMA

By Norman Lewis. *Jonathan Cape.* 18s.

Reviewed by Henry Baerlein

It seems that a foreigner in Burma never quite qualifies as a human being because he has omitted to spend a token period as a novice in a Buddhist monastery. But Mr. Lewis is surely considered quite human by the Burmese, for he has spent many arduous days and still more disturbed nights in their company. The terrific obstacles that are put in the way of travellers today only made him more determined to overcome them. And the picture he has brought back for us—his excellent writing and the no less excellent photographs—make this a book to treasure. It appears that while fishermen, as takers of life, are despised by the orthodox Burmese, they explain that all they do is to place the fish on the bank to dry after their long soaking in the water. If in this process they should happen to die, there can be no harm in eating them. And when the Burmese king in 1858 laid the foundations of the wall at Mandalay, fifty-two carefully selected persons were buried alive underneath it; this was a figure regarded by the Board of Astrologers to err on the side of parsimony. These gentlemen would be shaken by the sight of honey at a tea-table, for it is used in Burma principally to preserve the corpses of holy men before they are cremated and even when offered for consumption is suspected of having been put to this use. On the other hand, if your bird's nest soup is produced by the grey-rumped swift, you can rejoice, because these birds do not foul their nests and do not permit their young to do so.

THE BOOK OF CRICKET

By Denzil Batchelor. *Collins.* 42s.

Reviewed by David West

This book contains short appreciations of nearly two hundred famous cricketers, from W. G. Grace to P. B. H. May, and is illustrated with more than three hundred photographs—some, unfortunately, rather smudgily reproduced.

Before criticisms of detail are made, it must be said at once that the total achievement of the book is impressive. From no other single volume will the cricket-lover get such a good idea of what so many great players did and what they looked like while doing it. Mr. Batchelor has a good knowledge of the Australian cricket scene and can give us comparatively unfamiliar information and anecdotes about the heroes of the Commonwealth. He helps us to understand, for example, the reverence with which Victor Trumper is regarded. A reasonable amount of space is given to the players of the newer cricketing countries, and room has been found for an American player—J. B. King of Philadelphia.

Now for a few small complaints. First, it is desirable that, in a book concentrated on individual achievements, there should be in every case a note of the player's highest innings or best bowling performance. The article on A. C. Maclaren, for example, omits the fact that his 424 against Somerset in 1895 was for twenty-seven years a world record in first-class matches. One would like to have details of that historic innings, also of Bradman's 452, which is the present record.

Inevitably, a few great players have had to be left out; the most regrettable omissions, to my mind, are S. M. J. Woods, Arthur Richardson, Bob Wyatt and the underrated Arthur Fagg. On the subject of underrated players, I am glad that Eric Hollies finds a place here; but why does Mr. Batchelor say of him: 'there can never have been a poorer bat in first-class cricket'? I have seen Hollies bat correctly and coolly to help in a stand of sixty or so for Warwickshire's last wicket.

Doubtless every reader will have one or two small faults to find with this book; but no cricket-lover should fail to read it.

NOW READY—THE NEW BRUNTON BOOK!

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★

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gives you the answer. By the popular author, journalist and lecturer on how to read character and personality from the face, it will help you to anticipate people's behaviour in almost any circumstances. 'I am impressed.'—*Prof. M. Relton, University of London.* Mr. Penry's articles on the subject have been prominently featured in the London *Star. Over 80 illustrations, diagrams and charts.* *Ready Nov. 20* **18s.**

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HEAR AND FORGIVE By Emyr Humphreys. *Gollancz.* 12s. 6d.
A GIANT'S STRENGTH By Alex Comfort. *Routledge.* 10s. 6d.
THE CLOSEST KIN THERE IS By Clara Winston. *Gollancz.* 12s. 6d.
NAKED TO MINE ENEMIES By Susan Yorke. *John Lehmann.* 12s. 6d.
THE MAN WHO WAS LOVED By James Stern. *Secker & Warburg.* 12s. 6d.
MR. SMITH By Louis Bromfield. *Cassell.* 15s.
HANS By Michel Boutron. *Derek Verschoyle.* 9s. 6d.

Reviewed by Stevie Smith

What one likes about MR. EMYR HUMPHREY'S hero David is that he knows himself so well and often prays to be made better. He is a scripture teacher in a bilateral school and of firm upbringing. And all the time he laughs because it is certainly odd to go on praying to be made better when he has run away from his prim wife and taken up with a rich mistress. This Helen is a managing girl, very practical as well as passionate. Their cohabitation is a sad picture—for moralists—of a couple of sinners getting on remarkably well in spite of bad temper and not liking each other's friends. Mr. Humphreys has an unblinkered eye for the human situation; the real mystery is not sexual attraction but getting fond of people. David dotes on the Old Testament; he thinks that few men of today can speak without embarrassment of the Saviour. The school scenes are brilliant; the headmaster is a good man who often heroically makes decisions that cannot but mar his career (the school governor, a city magnate, who rules also in the school's south London suburb, is not good). The headmaster's brother is a clever young villain, and David, who is also a novelist, has the idea of writing a book on the good-and-bad-brother theme, cast for the Protector Somerset who obtained the execution of his brother on high moral grounds. Meanwhile he loves Helen and does not pity himself for his weakness. Slapping down the telephone after a sharp exchange with her stockbroker, Helen throws herself into his arms with such a melting look it might be the Death of Little Nell. There is great talent in this book.

When the aeroplane from the Iron Power makes its forced landing in wild country of a dream quality, Hedler, the mathematical phenomenon, shoots the pilot; he is now free. He looks round him at the stretching plants, the stones, the rocks, the distant mountains and the angular trees. He unpacks the brilliant rations, so scientifically chosen and wrapped. He makes nightmare climbs and walks, down the rock clefts and up the mountains, and the searching aeroplanes fly backwards and forwards, and as long as his radio lasts, he can pick up the blah-blah as the great ones of the war-world speak to pattern. Hedler is an unlikable cold creature, a calculating machine on the run; first he was a German working for the Nazis, then for the Russians, and now he wants to get across the frontier into Persia. The Russians in this book are ordinary intelligent people 'on the job'; they may be looking for dossiers at home, or opening up far away useful new marginal territory and wondering about Hedler. There is a beautiful scene when the gunfire smokes out the corridor of rocks and Hedler comes riding with a broken ankle. MR. COMFORT does well to avoid the bogey-presentment of the Russians, but the political conversations, though very interesting, verge at times on the sophistical and the tune is always 'A plague on both your houses!' (Where then is he? He is a Martian.) It is the poet in this author that compels and it is to the poetry of action and tranquillity—beautiful animals, men working, excitement, danger, snow, dust, and scars—that the book owes life and beauty.

MISS WINSTON is a writer with a beautiful and limpid style and great power of compassion; there is also the humour of true humanity, that awkward humour that will creep in when the impresarios of tragedy most wish it would not. The story is set in American up-country. There are the little farms on harsh sub-mountainous soil; the neighbours do not find the Dary family at all neighbourly; the Darys keep themselves to themselves because Pa is off his head and Ma has her pride. When Phyllis comes back to the farm—the educated daughter who went to Boston—she does not know at first that crafty Pa is mad and cannot understand Ma's attitude to gabbing and gadding. Only when Pa sets fire to the farm buildings does he have to be put away. It is then that Lloyd, Ma's beloved son, takes over. It is the time of Pearl Harbour. In words of an outstanding simple power of emotion, Miss Winston tells of the boys being drafted and the simple parents left puzzled like an animal that cannot find a reason, for they did not know about the world at war; they only wanted to be quiet decent creatures at home. The family's secret about mad Pa gains exemption for Lloyd and the neighbours look with miserable and bitter eyes at this last young man that is left. The Darys now grow rather odd; brother and sister fall in love with each other but it is infinitely touching this situation, not disgusting at all. The little dog Joey is left a week in a trap by the lethargic neighbour. There is a sing-song at the next farm which Phyllis goes to the night of the fire. In the cold dawn sheds cows stand to be milked, warming the milkers with their animal warmth. These are memorable scenes, and so is the book memorable, rather like Edith Wharton.

Wolsey's sad words '. . . naked to mine enemies' (Had I but served my God, etc.) are not the happiest choice for MISS YORKE's hero, Peter Frame, and her explanation that Peter 'was his own King' is curious rather than helpful. Peter's grievance is that as a boy he had to sleep on a camp bed in the dining-room to make room for one more boarder. This horror pursues him through life and also the horror that though Mother is mother,

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Father is not father—the next door neighbour is, and he is a man Peter hated as a child and he dies in a syphilitic state. Peter's story is told by three women—his sister, his mistress and his wife. The sister is shrewd and truthful, though biased by exasperation. It is the mistress who has most to say. She is Molly Llaragua, an English woman of family married to Alberto, a rich and aristocratic Argentinian, living in Buenos Aires. Peter arrives from New York State. He jilts his home-town fiancée who withers away. His sister follows him, and with the help and friendship of Molly sets up as a fashionable photographer. Peter is mad about Molly by now and the husband is complaisant. Peter seduces his sister's young and impecunious secretary and when she is going to have a baby throws her out of his car, a bright yellow convertible. This incident is seen by Molly, but still she will have him. One is almost sorry for Mr. Frame by this time, Molly is so domineering. There are some very good pictures of Buenos Aires and the common *nouveaux riches* people who are called Bodenas generically. But when it comes to the English social grandeur of Molly, it does not ring true—it is a foreigner's idea of it, with the talk of *noblesse oblige* and what can and cannot be 'done'. But though manners and morals are muddled, the story is lively; it is one that hardworking readers, especially ladies, will enjoy in a quiet hour.

MR. STERN'S short stories are all of high talent and originality; he brings the scene before you, the people and the moment. In the name story there is Africa and the eccentric Major Carter, a man 'beloved of all' though the black boys are not allowed to express their love when it comes to the funeral stone. Major Carter loves black and white people alike and will help them all; he is a once-born soul, a glad creature, and it is his special joy to kill snakes by whirling them round his head like a stock-whip till they come apart in the air, but the mamba's severed head nips him in the stomach and so he dies, and the flags fly at half-mast and, after the church service the black people carry his body in the coffin (they were not allowed inside). Perhaps the most famous of these stories is the terrible horse tale where the mad hunting-woman, having horribly broken her leg and now for ever crippled, torments her little son because he is nervous. The frenzied hunt is unforgettable, the nervous child riding like the devil Herne, but the second broken leg (his calmer brother's) is still, I think, one too many. There are twelve stories in this book, all different, all good.

MR. BROMFIELD'S Mr. Smith is a victim of the American scene. He is a man who in his youth saw higher things. He was invited—but only once—to a house where they appreciated music and art and where there were persons of international standing, including a witty English lady of title. Back home things were very different, the necessity of being just plain folks like everybody else in the monied set—that is to say with the same sort of cars, radios, servants and dogs—was paramount. He grew slowly to hate his wife because she was preventing him writing and 'being different', and this unhappy situation, with the little girl taking after mother and the boy favouring father, is described with inspired aggravation. Mr. Bromfield has not lost his power of accumulating significant details. War brings welcome separation from Home and Wife and out on a forgotten island guarding stores from Japs who occasionally swim over half-starved to raid the soup tins, Mr. Smith has time to write his book which is supposed to be the one we are now reading. It is pathetic in the way a mournful dog is pathetic; only in the island scenes does one feel a human sorrow for Mr. Smith. He is very good indeed on his island with the half-dozen or so Americans, adrift, homesick and forgotten, who are his companions. He is shot 'by mistake' by the poor white one with a grievance.

With HANS we come to the German Soul that always makes the English feel so cynical. Hans is a prisoner-of-war in French hands. He cannot understand why Germany is not loved the way she ought to be, and though he adduces several reasons from his own experience (throwing the living boys on the fire, etc., etc.), the months

of captivity are largely spent in saying *Warum?* This word is not printed in italics, and it is a little puzzling as a chapter heading because at first one pronounces it English and thinks it is a place-name (Wareham?). Hans was once a famous conductor ('the Germany of Beethoven, Mozart' etc.), but he played with the Nazis. But why will not people let by-gones be by-gones? *Warum nicht?* eh? He is a serious and kindly person in captivity and goes to work on a French farm. He thinks the peasant woman in charge 'fulfils her purpose as a woman' by being maternal and seeing he gets hot soup, but the son, Louis, is full of hate. *Warum doch?* He goes out hoeing the fields thinking, *Soll ich niemals wieder ruhig sein?* Meanwhile Louis takes his gun and shoots the local French traitor but Hans is able to shield him when the police come. Later on Hans is killed, but not before he has written a long letter to the peasant woman explaining his *Weltanschauung*, hoping, without much grounds for it, that she will 'understand'. MR. BOUTRON can write very well; the scenes are extremely alive. Only his own point-of-view is ambiguous. Does he find Hans *sympatisch*? Or does it seem to him at times that this particular German soul is conceited, possibly savage and in the long run idiotic?

THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

By Ernest Hemingway. *Jonathan Cape.* 7s. 6d.

Reviewed by Wesley Thurston

Studying Ernest Hemingway's latest piece of work, billed as a '27,000-word novel', it seems important to note how his simple, brutal philosophy, unaltered through thirty years, has produced progressive changes in his famous style—till, at long last, the great hunter seems to be caught in his own trap.

It was a deftly-contrived trap. Hemingway descended from Jack London (a burly writer who also drank deeply of Nietzsche), acted the surly nephew to Stephen Crane, slept with the great French realists, dreaming of Turgenev. His tremendous, stark style set the pace (1925–35) for terse dialogue, built craftily against patches of

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neatly sketched rough ground, where his characters roamed—equipped equally for rifle-sport or dalliance-demonstrative.

His masculine stuff nearly always portrayed *conflict between men.*

Freudian for more reasons than one, it gripped the imagination of a generation of writers; he became an 'influence', and his readers talked like his characters. It seemed that, as Auden wrote, in another sense, of Yeats, 'he became his admirers.' For his stories and sketches evoked controversy; he wrote several bad books, and cried for critics to devour, finally writing like a windy, if simplified, old man in *Across the River and Into the Trees.*

But simplification can become attenuation, and trap you in the end. Here, Hemingway has tried to take an isolated experience, a crucial one in the life of a tiny man, and to make his struggle with fate, the sea and a huge fish into an emotional experience worthy of the masters of great literature. Santiago, the old fisherman, is excellent, but as an animated, colourful character-sketch who belongs in the *New Yorker.* It is symbolic of what has happened to Hemingway to say that; worse, to add that Santiago ended in pre-book publication in *Life.*

For here there is no conflict between man and man. There is only the attempt to personalise the struggle between Santiago and the fish—and the experience is as skeletonised as the great fish becomes at the end. In its way, as an isolated piece of writing submitted by one of his imitators, there is no doubt that it would be considered a powerful, quite beautiful story. One suspects that every publisher would think long upon it, upon its similarity to a fine Japanese painting. For, in that art, too, one admires almost solely the extraordinary technique of depicting an isolated experience—but one drained of nearly all emotional appeal. The artist forces the onlooker to feel, but it is the feeling of wonder: How the craftsman fought to achieve such lines.

In a story lacking struggle between people, Hemingway is lost. He cannot achieve the Homeric pitch, if this is a sample; he patently tried to out-do the Hemingway pitch in stylised style and organisation-within-theme. The philosophy remains, as from 1922, and *Farewell To Arms*: 'But they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you.' And Santiago replies, over the thirty years: 'The wind is our friend, anyway . . . And bed, he thought. Bed is my friend. Bed will be a great thing. It is easy when you are beaten . . . I never knew how easy it was. And what beat you, he thought. 'Nothing,' he said aloud. 'I went out too far.'

At the risk of seeming facetious, so did Ernest Hemingway. He built the great trap of simplification for moderns. No one quite equalled him at it. He who wrote so well of guts, and over-sexed the sex of every sex, giving the shade of blood itself a sort of modern sex-appeal, has achieved, finally, an immaculate conception of an emotional crisis. For one does not really care about poor old Santiago.

THE MIDNIGHT DIARY

By Michael Burn. *Rupert Hart Davis.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Burn has been a successful journalist; he is now, after *Yes, Farewell,* and *Childhood at Oriol,* an experienced and successful novelist, and an extremely versatile one, because *The Midnight Diary* is quite different from his other two novels. It is a historical novel in the true sense, although the history is tragically recent and Mr. Burn himself saw most of it happening. This is the story of how night fell on Budapest, that long black night which has as yet no sign of any dawn. Irene Mannheim, whose character and development makes this book a novel as well as a history, was a typical cultured Viennese 'liberal' of the '30s, with a sentimental leaning to the left. Her views and her loathsome husband land her in a concentration camp from which she is liberated by the Russians. She deliberately chooses to settle in Budapest rather than Vienna, and there she finds that she has not escaped from the concentration camp after all. 'Fear has become part of our existence,' she writes towards the end, and how, step by step, it became part of everyone's existence is brilliantly and convincingly described.

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